NATION

Protests hit WB eateries, revenue slumps

≫ Page: 4 ≪

BUSINESS

Equity mutual funds inflow drops 10% in September

≫ Page: 7 ≪

SPORTS

Ranji Trophy: Shreyas and Kishan are on a mission

≫ Page: 8 ≪

www.twitter.com/EnglishSalar
www.facebook.com/EnglishSalar
www.instagram.com/dailysalarenglish
youtube.com/@dailysalardigital

SALAR
DIGITAL ENGLISH DAILY, BENGALURU

سالار روزنامہ بنگلور

Website: salarnews.in | www.magzter.com | 11 OCTOBER 2024 | FRIDAY | BENGALURU | 7 RABI UL SANI, 1446 AH | Vol 4 | Issue No 257 | Pages: 8

HAPPY AYUDHA POOJA

On the occasion of Ayudha Pooja, our office will remain closed on 11 October, 2024. Hence, there will be no edition of the Salar Digital English Daily dated 12 October, 2024

FINAL JOURNEY OF INDIA'S RATAN

Tata Group's ex-chairman was cremated with state honour

MUMBAI, 10 OCT

Corporate leaders, politicians and celebrities joined hundreds of people on Thursday as they bid final adieu to one of India's most respected and internationally recognised business leaders, Ratan Tata, who died aged 86.

Last rites were performed at Mumbai's Worli Crematorium with full state honours in the presence of Union Home Minister Amit Shah, his cabinet colleague Piyush Goyal, Maharashtra Chief Minister Eknath Shinde, his deputy Devendra Fadnavis, and Congress leader and former chief minister Sushilkumar Shinde.

Family and friends as well as top officials of Tata group joined the ceremony where Mumbai Police paid tribute to Tata with a gun salute.

Tata, the former Tata Group chairman who transformed a staid group into India's largest and most influential conglomerate with a string of eye-catching deals breathed his last at south Mumbai's Breach Candy Hospital at 11.30 pm on 9 October.

Maharashtra as well as half a dozen other states declared one day mourning while some official programmes, including a scheduled press conference by Goyal on his US visit, were cancelled in his honour.

Maharashtra Cabinet passed a resolution urging the Centre to confer 'Bharat Ratna', the country's highest civilian award, on Ratan.

Tata Group's flagship IT firm, TCS went ahead with holding its pre-scheduled meeting to approve financial results for the quarter ending.

Ratan Tata's body was on Thursday morning taken in a hearse, decked with white flowers, from his home to the NCPA in Mumbai where it would be kept for people to pay their last respects. Draped in the Indian national flag, his body was kept at a cultural centre. The last rites were performed as per the Parsi tradition. Ratan remains were taken on their final journey to the electric crematorium at Worli. While traditionally Zoroastrian community lay their departed ones for the vultures to consume at the 'Tower of Silence', Tata's cremation reflected changing traditions in the Parsi community. —*PTI*

>>>More on Pages 2,4,5 & 7

People pay homage to business leader Ratan Tata at NCPA lawns, in Mumbai on Thursday ***PHOTO: PTI***

TATA GROUP STOCKS RISE UP TO 10 PC

Shares of Tata Group companies on Thursday rose up to 10 per cent, with Tata Chemicals and Tata Teleservices among the major gainers. The stock of Tata Investment Corporation soared 10.47 per cent to trade at Rs 7,235.80 apiece, Tata Chemicals climbed 6.26 per cent to Rs 1,174.85, Tata Teleservices Maharashtra jumped 5.84 per cent to Rs 83.77, Tata Elxsi rose 3.37 per cent to Rs 7,867.80, Tata Power went up 2.56 per cent to Rs 472.70 on the BSE. Also, shares of Tata Technologies, Rallis India, Nelco, Tejas Networks, TajGVK Hotels & Resorts, and Indian Hotels & Company also rose.

₹7,000 CR EXPENSES

K'taka forms SIT to probe BJP's Covid 'scam'

BENGALURU, 10 OCT

State government on Thursday decided to constitute a Special Investigation Team (SIT) and a Cabinet sub-committee to take further action on the report by the Justice Michael D' Cunha Commission of Inquiry.

The panel investigated alleged irregularities in the purchase of equipment and medicines during the Covid-19 pandemic when the BJP was in power.

The decision was taken at a meeting of the Cabinet, chaired by Chief Minister Siddaramaiah.

In the "partial" report submitted on 31 August in 11 volumes, the commission examined the expenditure to the tune of Rs 7,223.64 crore, Law and Parliamentary Affairs Minister HK Patil told reporters later, adding, "they have not pinpointed that so much (scale) is misappropriation."

He, however, said the commission has recommended recovery of Rs 500 crore.

It has also been decided to begin the recovery proceedings immediately and to black list those companies or establishments involved in the wrongdoing.

The Cabinet also decided withdraw 43 criminal cases registered in various police stations in the State.

It also gave its approval for extending by an year the term of the SIT constituted in the Karnataka Lokayukta for investigating the illegalities in mining, with a probe into several cases still pending, he said.

Administrative approval has also been given for construction of "Reshme Bhavana" at an estimated cost of Rs 527.50 crore on 4.25 acres of land owned by the Department of Sericulture at Okalipuram here with entire investment by Karnataka State Minerals Corporation Limited (KSMCL).

The Cabinet also gave its nod for construction of hi-tech Cocoon market at Shidlaghatta in Chikkaballapura district at an estimated cost of Rs 200 crores.

It also decided to create Karnataka Skill Development Corporation under Companies Act, 2013. —*PTI*

The panel investigated 'irregularities' in the purchase of equipment and medicines during the Covid-19 pandemic ***PHOTO: PTI***

India bans Hizb ut-Tahrir as terrorist group

NEW DELHI, 10 OCT

The government on Thursday banned Hizb-ut-Tahrir (HuT), a global pan-Islamic group set up in Jerusalem in 1953, saying the organisation aims to establish Islamic state and caliphate globally, including in India, through jihad and terrorist activities. The Union Home Ministry said the HuT is involved in radicalisation and motivation of gullible youth to join terrorist organisations, such as ISIS, and raising funds for terror activities. —*PTI*

Media slams scribe arrest in Gujarat terms it 'overreach'

NEW DELHI, 10 OCT

Media organisations on Thursday expressed concern over the arrest and ten-day custody of journalist Mahesh Langa by the Ahmedabad Crime Branch, terming his interrogation a "procedural overreach". Press Club of India, Delhi Union of Journalists, Indian Women's Press Corps and Press Association said his questioning was a means to harass an individual whose name doesn't even feature in the primary FIR. —*PTI*

Police seize 200 kg of cocaine worth ₹2,000 cr in Delhi

NEW DELHI, 10 OCT

In second big drug haul in a week, Delhi Police seized 200kg of cocaine worth Rs 2,000 crore from west Delhi, an official said on Thursday. The seizure is suspected to be linked with earlier recovery of 562kg of drugs worth over Rs 5,000 crore from southwest Delhi's Mahipalpur, the official said. He said a raid is underway in west Delhi's Ramesh Nagar area. According to the police, an international drugs smuggling syndicate is behind the massive cocaine consignment. —*PTI*

M'rashtra seeks non-creamy layer limit hike to ₹15 lakh

MUMBAI, 10 OCT

Maharashtra Cabinet on Thursday decided to request the Union government to increase the income limit to qualify for 'non-creamy layer' to Rs 15 lakh per year from the current Rs 8 lakh.

The decision came ahead of the Assembly elections which are expected to be held next month. A non-creamy layer certificate, which means the family income of a person is below the prescribed limit, is needed to avail of reservation benefits in the Other Backward Class (OBC) category. A draft ordinance to accord a constitutional status to the Maharashtra State Scheduled Caste Commission was also approved in the cabinet meeting, said a statement from the office of Chief Minister Eknath Shinde. The ordinance will be tabled in the next session of the legislature, it said, adding that 27 posts were approved for the commission.

In other decisions, the cabinet approved a proposal to set up welfare corporations for journalists and newspaper vendors. Additional funds of Rs 709.27 crore were sanctioned for the Balasaheb Thackeray Turmeric Research Centre in Hingoli district. A proposal under which non-profit organisation Sulabh International will provide toilets and rest rooms at all 57 government hospitals in the state was approved in the meeting, the release said. Government land in Akse and Malwani in Borivali suburb of Mumbai will be given for the Dharavi redevelopment project and ineligible slum-dwellers will be provided housing in these areas spread over 140 acres, it said. —*PTI*

MODI IN LAOS

Modi announces 10-point plan to strengthen India-ASEAN ties

VIENTIANE, 10 OCT

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Thursday announced a 10-point plan to strengthen India-ASEAN comprehensive partnership and asserted that ties with the regional grouping were critical to guiding Asia's future.

Addressing the 21st India-ASEAN Summit here, Modi noted that India-ASEAN trade had doubled to over USD 130 billion in the past decade and announced a review of the trade in goods agreement to harness the greater economic potential of the partnership.

Modi addressed the leaders of the ASEAN nations that include Malaysia, Thailand, Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Myanmar, Philippines, Vietnam, Laos and Singapore.

Modi said India was commemorating the 10th anniversary of its Act East Policy, which has given new energy, direction and momentum to the historic relationship between India and the ASEAN nations.

The 10-point plan to further strengthen the India-ASEAN partnership includes celebrating the year 2025 as the ASEAN-India Year of Tourism, doubling the number of scholarships at Nalanda University and providing new grants for ASEAN students at Agricultural Universities in India. Modi also announced celebrating the decade of Act East Policy through several people-centric activities including Youth Summit, Start-up Festival, Hackathon, Music Festival, ASEAN-India Network of Think-Tanks and Delhi Dialogue. —*PTI*

Prime Minister Narendra Modi along with global leaders during the 21st ASEAN-India Summit, in Vientiane on Thursday ***PHOTO: AMI***

4 INDs JOIN NC, OMAR NAMED NC LEGISLATURE HEAD

SRINAGAR, 10 OCT

Omar Abdullah was on Thursday unanimously elected as the leader of the National Conference legislature party, party President Farooq Abdullah said here.

Four independent MLAs extended support to NC, leading his party secure the majority mark. With this, the role of the Congress, which had won six seats in the Union Territory, seems to have been reduced from a junior partner to a relatively insignificant one in the incoming government.

Meanwhile, he said a meeting of the pre-poll alliance partners would be held on Friday to take the process of government formation further.

NC has emerged as the single largest party in the polls with 42 seats and has a comfortable majority in the 95-member House as its alliance partners Congress and CPI(M) have won six seats and one seat. —*PTI*

FOR INTENSE POETIC PROSE

Nobel in literature goes to S Korea's Kang

STOCKHOLM, 10 OCT

South Korean author Han Kang was awarded the Nobel Prize in literature Thursday for what the Nobel committee called "her intense poetic prose that confronts historical traumas and exposes the fragility of human life."

Nobel committee chairman Anders Olsson praised Han's "physical empathy for the vulnerable, often female lives" of her characters.

Han becomes the first Asian woman and the first South Korean writer to win the Nobel literature prize. She also becomes the second South Korean national to win a Nobel Prize, after late former President Kim Dae-jung won the peace prize in 2000. He was honoured for his efforts to restore democracy in South Korea during the country's previous military rule and improve relations with war-divided rival North Korea.

Han wins the Nobel at a time of growing global influence of South Korean culture, which in recent years has included the success of films like director Bong Joon-ho's Oscar-winning 'Parasite', the Netflix survival drama 'Squid Game' and the worldwide fame of K-pop groups like BTS and BLACKPINK.

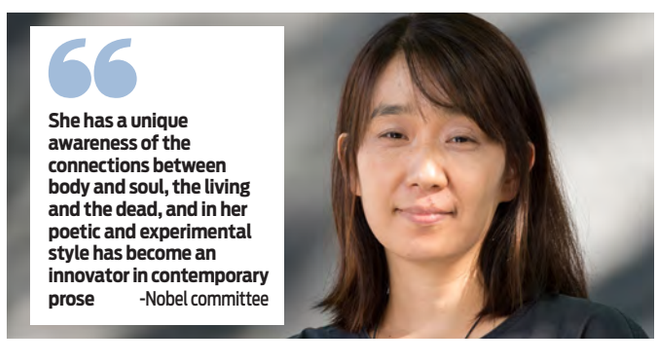

She has a unique awareness of the connections between body and soul, the living and the dead, and in her poetic and experimental style has become an innovator in contemporary prose -Nobel committee

PHOTO: X/@NOBELPRIZE

Han, 53, won the International Booker Prize in 2016 for 'The Vegetarian', an unsettling novel in which a woman's decision to stop eating meat has devastating consequences. At the time of winning that award, Han said writing novels "is a way of questioning for me." Her novel 'Human Acts' was an International Booker Prize finalist in 2018.

Han made her publishing debut as a poet in 1993; her first short story collection was published the following year and her first novel, 'Black Deer', in 1998. Works translated into English include 'The Vegetarian', 'Greek Lessons', 'Human Acts' and 'The White Book', a poetic novel that draws on the death of Han's older sister shortly after birth. —*PTI*

Tennis great Nadal to quit after Davis Cup

MADRID, 10 OCT

Tennis great Rafael Nadal announced his impending retirement from the sport on Thursday at age 38 after winning 22 Grand Slam singles titles during an unprecedented era he shared with his rivals in the so-called Big Three, Roger Federer and Novak Djokovic.

Nadal said he will retire after next month's Davis Cup finals that will be played in Malaga, Spain.

The Spaniard indicated his decision was related to persistent injury problems.

Nadal's unrelenting, physical style of play — every point pursued as though it were his last, sprinting and sliding into place for that high-bouncing bullwhip of a lefty forehand — made him one of the greats of the game and the unquestioned King of Clay, the slow, red surface on which he claimed his record 14 French Open championships.

That's more than anyone, man or woman, won at any one of the sport's four major tournaments, a dominance celebrated by a statue of Nadal that stands near the main entrance to the grounds of Roland Garros and in the shadow of its main stadium, Court Philippe Chatrier.

Nadal also won four trophies at the US Open and two apiece at Wimbledon and the Australian Open, giving him a career Grand Slam. His last pair arrived in 2022, at Melbourne in January and at Paris in June, pushing him ahead of Federer for the men's record of 20 Grand Slam titles. Federer announced his retirement when he was 41 the end of the 2022 season.

Both have since been surpassed by Djokovic, who is up to 24.

So much of Nadal's success was seen, fairly or not, through the prism of his encounters with Federer and Djokovic. The tennis world was consumed with the debate over which was most deserving of the "GOAT" moniker. —*PTI*

Really, everything I have experienced has been a dream come true. I leave with the absolute peace of mind of having given my best, of having made an effort in every way

-Rafael Nadal, Tennis player

PHOTO: FREEPIX

Auto driver held for raping, killing mentally ill woman

KOLAR, 10 OCT

An auto-rickshaw driver was arrested and remanded in judicial custody for allegedly raping and murdering a mentally ill woman at Mulbagal in Kolar district. According to police, the deceased woman's husband, Shankarappa, had lodged a complaint with Mulbagal police that his first wife Susheelamma was mentally ill and used to go out of the home many times. On 24 September, she left the home around 7pm after dinner and did not return home. Efforts to trace her failed, and the next morning, Susheelamma's body was found lying near Hyderinagar. A police team under Mulbagal DySP Nandakumar scanned footage from more than 125 CCTV cameras and found that an auto driver took the woman at 1.15am on 25 October from near APMC yard in Mulbagal. Police tracked down the auto driver, Syed Suhail, from Murugamalla in Chintamani taluk of Chikkaballapur district. During questioning, Suhail confessed that he hit the woman with a stone. After Susheelamma fell unconscious, the driver raped her and dumped the woman near Hyderinagar thinking that she is dead. According to Mulbagal police, the woman was alive when the accused raped her and she might have breathed her last after the rape. —*Salar News*

Mandya mechanic wins lottery worth Rs 25 cr in Kerala

BENGALURU, 10 OCT

This year's Kerala Thiruvonam Bumper Lottery winner, which fetches a prize money of Rs 25 crore, is won by a mechanic from Mandya district in Karnataka. "I have been purchasing lottery tickets for almost 15 years now. Finally, I have won," Altaf told PTI Videos in Kalpetta, Wayanad on Thursday. He was in Wayanad to cash his lottery ticket and complete other formalities. He said he usually goes to Wayanad to visit his childhood friend who lives in Meenangadi every now and then. At the draw held at Gorky Bhavan in Thiruvananthapuram on Wednesday, the winning number, TG 43422, sold by SJ Lucky Centre in Panamaram in Wayanad was chosen.—*PTI*

Ministers support CM amid demand for his resignation

Cong asks CM, DKS to end flutters about leadership change

BENGALURU, 10 OCT

Ministers on Thursday at a Cabinet meeting expressed their solidarity with and support to Chief Minister Siddaramaiah, who is facing demand from Opposition parties for his resignation following charges in MUDA site allotment case.

The move comes amid behind-the-scenes political activities within the ruling Congress, with a few Ministers in the Siddaramaiah Cabinet recently holding closed door meetings, fuelling speculation about leadership change.

"...even (Ministers) meeting Kharge (Congress President Mallikarjun Kharge) is being represented wrongly by you (meida), even if Ministers meet over food, it is also represented wrongly, in this backdrop during the cabinet today, all the ministers expressed their solidarity and support, stating that we are with him," Law and Parliamentary Affairs Minister HK Patil said.

According to some reports, Congress high command has asked Siddaramaiah and Deputy Chief Minister and State Congress Chief DK Shivakumar to end the "flutters" about the change in leadership, while expressing displeasure over statements being made by a few ministers and some of them holding separate meetings.

Amid demand by Opposition parties for Siddaramaiah to quit, PWD Minister Satish Jarkiholi on Sunday met Home Minister G Parameshwara, a senior leader from the SC community, in Tumakuru, after last week's meeting with Kharge in Delhi, leading to intense speculations in political circles over leadership change.

There was also a closed-door meeting between Jarkiholi, Parameshwara and Social Welfare Minister HC Mahadevappa.

Siddaramaiah is facing the Lokayukta and ED probes into alleged irregularities in allotment of 14 sites to his wife by MUDA. —*PTI*

Siddaramaiah is facing Lokayukta and ED probes into alleged irregularities in allotment of sites to his wife by MUDA PHOTO: MOHAMMED ASAD

LOKAYUKTA QUIZZES CM'S BROTHER-IN-LAW

MYSURU, 10 OCT

Days after filing an FIR against Chief Minister Siddaramaiah and his family in MUDA case, Lokayukta police on Thursday questioned CM's brother-in-law Mallikarjuna Swamy, who had purchased the controversial land in Kesare in return for which MUDA allotted 14 alternative sites to his sister Parvathi.

Devaraju J, who had sold the 3.16 acres in Kesare to Swamy, also appeared before Lokayukta cops. They were quizzed separately. Lokayukta SP TJ Udesh had issued a notice to both on Wednesday to appear before him on Thursday. The move comes days after a special court directed Lokayukta to carry out a probe against Siddaramaiah on allegations of illegalities in the allotment of 14 sites worth Rs 56 crore to his wife Parvathi by MUDA. —*Salar News*

CHANGE OF CM WILL HAPPEN SOON: VIJAYENDRA

BELAGAVI, 10 OCT

State BJP President BY Vijayendra on Thursday predicted fast-paced political developments in State in the next few days, including change of Chief Minister over the MUDA 'scam'.

"A lot of political developments are certainly taking place in the State. In the next few days the kind of fast-paced political developments will take place, which both you (media) and the people of the state will see," he said here.

Vijayendra on Sunday claimed that, according to his information, Chief Minister Siddaramaiah, who is facing a probe in the MUDA (Mysuru Urban Development Authority) site allotment case, may resign after Dasara.

A few ministers in the Siddaramaiah Cabinet had held closed-door meetings, fuelling speculation about leadership change.

On leaders in the BJP "not accepting" his leadership and openly making comments against him, Vijayendra said despite having seniors, the party leadership has given him the "big responsibility" to lead the party in the State. "Seniors in the party would need some time to understand me, considering them (their opposition to him) as anti-party activities will be wrong," he added. –*PTI*

CENTRAL PRISON PLOT

High Court found a procedural flaw in prosecution sanction granted by State government, leading to acquittals PHOTO: PTI

HC acquits 3 in Bengaluru terror conspiracy case

BENGALURU, 10 OCT

Karnataka High Court has acquitted three people, including a Pakistani national, from charges under Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA) related to a 2012 terror conspiracy allegedly plotted inside Bengaluru Central Prison.

The court found a procedural flaw in the prosecution sanction granted by State government, leading to the acquittals. The accused – Syed Abdul Rehman from Bengaluru, Afsar Pasha alias Khushiruddin from Chintamani in Kolar district and Mohammed Fahad Khoya from Karachi, Pakistan – were charged under provisions of UAPA and Indian Penal Code.

However, while acquitting them of these charges, the court upheld Rehman's conviction under Arms Act, 1959, and Explosive Substances Act, 1908. Rehman was found guilty of illegal possession of a revolver and concealing explosives, leading to a revised sentence of 10 years' imprisonment.

The court found that the sanction for prosecution was flawed. The court noted that under Section 45(2) of the UAPA, it is mandatory to consider the review committee's report before granting sanction. As the trial court overlooked this procedural lapse, the High Court concluded that the sanction order was invalid, thereby vitiating the charges under UAPA.

The court also noted the absence of independent evidence to substantiate the charges of criminal conspiracy to recruit youth for Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) and conduct attacks in Bengaluru, allegedly planned during the accused's imprisonment.

The charges largely relied on confessions from the accused, which the court deemed insufficient for conviction. The bench concluded that there was no proof linking Rehman to any activities directed by the other accused during their time in prison. —*PTI*

BDA to issue notice for neglecting vacant land

BENGALURU, 10 OCT

Lokayukta directed the Bengaluru Development Authority (BDA) to issue notices to landowners in Vishweshwaraiah Layout who are neglecting vacant plots and contributing to garbage accumulation.

Acting on a suo motu case, Lokayukta took up the issue after complaints about inefficient waste management in the area.

During a recent hearing, officials from the BDA, Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP), and Bengaluru Solid Waste Management Limited (BSWML) discussed the ineffective waste management practices in parts of Rajarajeshwari Nagar Zone, including Vishweshwaraiah Layout. While BBMP is handling garbage collection in the area, BDA's failure to clear dues has been hindering the process.

Lokayukta has instructed BDA to resolve these outstanding issues within two weeks and submit a detailed report. "Landowners must take responsibility for their plots," stated Justice BS Patil in the order. BDA has been directed to either compel the owners to clean up their properties or have BBMP carry out the cleanup at the owners' expense.

Additionally, the Lokayukta has ordered the installation of proper street lighting in the area and directed BBMP to allocate adequate staff and resources for efficient garbage collection. —*Salar News*

CM, HDK condole demise of Ratan Tata

BENGALURU, 10 OCT

Chief Minister Siddaramaiah, Union Minister Kumaraswamy and other prominent political leaders on Thursday condoled the demise of Tata Group chairperson emeritus Ratan Tata, who died following a prolonged illness.

Siddaramaiah called Tata an iconic industrialist and visionary leader.

"His (Ratan Tata) contributions to India's progress and philanthropy are immeasurable. His legacy of compassion, humility, and nation-building will continue to inspire generations," he said.

JD(S) supremo HD Deve Gowda said lost a visionary business leader in the passing of Tata. "In his early years as Chairman, Tata Group, I had negotiated the creation of a new airport for Bangalore with him. I was CM then," the former PM said on 'X'.

Expressing grief on 'X' Kumaraswamy wrote, "I'm deeply saddened to hear about Shri Ratan Tata's demise. His legacy as a philanthropist and industrialist has profoundly impacted countless lives and communities." —*PTI*

CM Siddaramaiah with industrialist Ratan Tata at Invest Karnataka, a global investors' meet, in Bengaluru on 2 March, 2016 PHOTO: PTI

> **Ratan Tata was an icon of not only industry but also of humanity. He supported children and people who are needy...this shows he was the greatest human being**
>
> -G Parameshwara, Home Minister

HE WAS ROLE MODEL FOR ME: NARAYANA MURTHY

BENGALURU, 10 OCT

Losing "dear friend" Tata Sons Chairman Emeritus Ratan Tata is "very painful", IT industry veteran and Infosys co-founder N R Narayana Murthy on Thursday said as he acknowledged that he was a role model for him in value-based leadership. "He (Tata) was indeed a moral compass for me whenever I had some ambiguity and confusion in ethical issues," the 78-year-old said. After conferring an honour on Tata in 2020, the software icon bent down to touch his feet and sought his blessings. —*PTI*

DASARA FESTIVAL

Mysuru decks up for jamboo savari tomorrow

MYSURU, 10 OCT

Mysuru, the cultural capital of Karnataka, is decked up for the historic jamboo savari (procession of elephants) and torchlight parade at Bannimantap Parade Grounds as part of Dasara celebrations on Saturday.

Chief Minister Siddaramaiah along with ministers will participate in the procession while Governor Thawarchand Gehlot will attend the torchlight parade.

The procession of the elephants led by golden howdah-carrying Abhiymanyu marks the culmination of nine-day Dasara festivities. With this, all Dasara-related events such as cultural programmes, flower shows, drone shows, Yuva Dasara, Yoga Dasara, Women and Raitha Dasara and wrestling will also come to an end. However, Dasara illumination will be on till 23 October and Dasara exhibition till the end of December this year.

On Vijayadashami day on Saturday, Siddaramaiah will kick off Dasara procession by performing Nandi Dhwaja puja on Makara Lagna between 1.41pm and 2.10pm at Kote Anjaneyaswamy Temple in the north gate of Mysore Palace. More than 50 cultural troupes and tableaux will be part of the procession. The dignitaries will offer floral tributes to elephant Abhimanyu on Kumba Lagna between 4pm and 4.30pm on Vijayadashami day.

Dasara elephants on Mysore Palace premises on Thursday; Vidhana Soudha staff create rangoli and government car drivers perform pooja on the occasion of Ayudha Puja festival, in Bengaluru PHOTOS: SALAR/MOHAMMED ASAD

Meanwhile, Forest Department has finalised the roles of nine elephants taking part in the Dasara procession. Dhananjaya will march as Nishaane Elephant (who will move at the forefront of the procession). He will be followed by Gopi, Sugreeva, Prashantha, Ekalavya, Mahendra and other elephants.

As lakhs of people are flooding the City, district administration and police have made a host of arrangements. City police have deployed more than 6,500 police personnel including 1,500 homeguards. In addition to the installation of 13,140 CCTVs cameras for surveillance, city police have also installed an additional 150 CCTVs along the procession route, Mysore Palace, Bannimantap Parade Grounds. —*Salar News*

Cycle Agarbathi gifts cookers to Dasara mahouts, kavadis

MYSURU, 10 OCT

Cycle Pure Agarbathi, one of the sponsors of Mysuru Dasara, honoured mahouts and kavadis and gifted them 65 pressure cookers during a function at Mysore Palace on Thursday. This is the second consecutive year that the company is honouring the mahouts and kavadis. Cycle Pure Agarbathies Managing Director Arjun Ranga said his company was delighted to continue supporting the mahouts remembering their tireless dedication in taking care of Dasara elephants in Mysuru during their stay. Jumbos also reflect a deep connection to their heritage. Deputy Conservator of Forests IB Prabhu Gowda thanked the company for honouring its mahouts and kavadis.

–*Salar News*

BBMP issues guidelines for waste management

BENGALURU, 10 OCT

To tackle the surge in waste during Dasara, Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) unveiled guidelines to ensure cleanliness and minimise environmental impact throughout the City.

Chief Commissioner Tushar Girinath urged vendors selling festival items such as balekandu, mango leaves, and flowers to segregate raw and dry waste, particularly in high-traffic markets. The guidelines strictly prohibit single-use plastics in markets and public spaces. To enforce this, dedicated teams of solid waste health officers and marshals will conduct daily inspections across each ward, imposing fines on offenders as per existing regulations.

With increased waste generation expected during the festivities, BBMP officials are tasked with estimating the additional waste and implementing measures for efficient collection and disposal. Special attention will be directed toward notorious blackspots—areas known for garbage accumulation—in markets and public spaces. Officials have been instructed to thoroughly clean these locations. —*Salar News*

KSRTC TO ROLL OUT EXTRA BUSES FOR HASANAMBA FEST

BENGALURU, 10 OCT

In view of the annual Hasanamba festival in Hassan from 24 October to 3 November, Karnataka State Road Transport Corporation (KSRTC) will introduce 100 extra bus services to ferry devotees and tourists. The temple, open only once a year, attracts thousands from across the State, including from Bengaluru, Mysuru, Tumakuru, and Chikkamagaluru districts. This year, the district is preparing for a record turnout of around 2.5 lakh visitors. "We anticipate a larger crowd this time due to extended holidays during the festival period," said Sandeep Shetty, Divisional Controller of KSRTC in Hassan.

KSRTC is also planning a tour package from the city bus station in Hassan to nearby historical sites such as Sakaleshpur, Belur and Halebeedu.

More buses for Mysuru Dasara

For Mysuru Dasara celebrations, KSRTC has arranged 70 special buses to cater to the anticipated surge of pilgrims and additional buses will be deployed based on passenger demand. Karnataka Tourism Development Corporation is also making plans to introduce double-decker buses in Mysuru during Dasara.

—*Salar News*

BRS' Rama Rao sues T'gana minister Surekha

HYDERABAD, 10 OCT

BRS working president KT Rama Rao on Thursday filed a defamation case against Telangana Minister Konda Surekha in a city court over her comments alleging he was the reason behind the divorce of actors Samantha Ruth Prabhu and Naga Chaitanya. Rama Rao, who earlier sent a legal notice to Surekha, demanding an apology for her comments on 2 October, claimed she made the defamatory statement with a malafide intent to harm his reputation and defame him, a punishable offence under the BNS. Surekha, Minister of Forest, withdrew her remarks that triggered strong reactions from political leaders and the Telugu cinema industry. Prabhu and Naga Chaitanya had criticised the comments and said their divorce was mutual. *—PTI*

HC to hear ex-Goa RSS chief's matter on 14 Oct

PANAJI, 10 OCT

The Goa Bench of Bombay High Court said it will hear the arguments concerning state RSS ex-chief Subhash Velingkar's pre-arrest bail plea on 14 October as he appeared before the police on Thursday. Velingkar is facing a case for "hurting religious sentiments" with his controversial comments about St Francis Xavier, the patron saint of Goa. The comments also triggered protests across the state. His anticipatory bail came up for hearing on Thursday before the single bench of Justice BP Deshpande. Velingkar's lawyer told the court that he was ready to cooperate with the police provided there was assurance that he wouldn't be arrested. A lower court on Monday had rejected Velingkar's pre-arrest bail plea. The public prosecutor told the High Court on Thursday that Velingkar would not be arrested if he cooperated with the investigation officer. *—PTI*

PHOTO: PTI

Great Nicobar project must be paused: Ramesh

NEW DELHI, 10 OCT

Congress leader Jairam Ramesh on Thursday said the Environment Ministry's claim that 8.5 lakh trees will get felled for the Great Nicobar Integrated Development Project is a "gigantic under-estimate" and asserted that the only sensible way forward is for the project to be paused and reviewed. On X, he said that the government claimed that only 50 per cent of this forest area, around 6,500 hectares, would actually be deforested, and that around 8.5 lakh trees would be cut, however, according to calculations by a rainforest ecologist with three decades of experience, these deforestation figures are gross underestimates. *—PTI*

Iltija accuses NC, CPI(M) of hooliganism

SRINAGAR, 10 OCT

The PDP on Thursday accused the NC and CPI(M) of indulging in hooliganism after victory in the Jammu and Kashmir Assembly elections. Addressing a press conference at the party headquarters here, People's Democratic Party (PDP) leader Iltija Mufti congratulated the National Conference (NC) on its victory and the party vice president Omar Abdullah on his election as the legislature party leader but questioned whether the huge majority was for hooliganism and destruction of properties. "The NC's elected MLA from Srigufwara-Bijbehara (Bashir Veeri) is indulging in hooliganism. His workers are destroying the outer walls of the houses of PDP workers, a cowshed belonging to a PDP worker was also burnt," she said. *—PTI*

Muizzu expresses gratitude for India's financial aid

India, Maldives had inked $400 million currency swap deal

MALE, 10 OCT

Maldives President Mohamed Muizzu with Prime Minister Narendra Modi in New Delhi **PHOTO: PTI**

Maldives President Mohamed Muizzu on Thursday expressed gratitude for India's financial assistance and its consistent support, especially during challenging times, as he and his wife Sajidha Mohamed returned after concluding their five-day state visit to the country.

In a press statement, Muizzu expressed gratitude for India's financial assistance, including the rollover of a USD 50 million Treasury Bill for another year.

The 46-year-old, who was sworn-in as Maldives president in November last year, also thanked India for additional support of INR 30 billion to USD 400 million under a bilateral currency swap agreement.

This was Muizzu's first state visit to India since taking office at the invitation of President Droupadi Murmu.

During the visit, Muizzu held high-level meetings with President Murmu, Prime Minister Narendra Modi and several other senior Indian government officials.

These discussions centred on strengthening the friendship and development partnership between the Maldives and India, the release said.

India and the Maldives on Monday inked a currency swap pact and agreed to extend development cooperation to build ports, road networks, schools and housing projects in the archipelago nation grappling with a financial crisis.

Prime Minister Modi and Maldivian President Muizzu also launched the Rupay card in the Maldives, inaugurated the new runway at the Hanimadhoo International airport and agreed to further strengthen bilateral relations that had hit a rocky patch last year.

The Maldivian president is known to have a soft corner for China and had chosen Turkiye for his first overseas visit after being elected to the top post in November last year.

The two sides also agreed on 'A Vision for Comprehensive Economic and Maritime Security Partnership', a document that encapsulates the various aspects of the cooperation. After the talks, India also handed over 700 social housing units in Hulhumale that were built under the EXIM Bank's buyer's credit facilities.

The two leaders acknowledged that it was an opportune time for both sides to chart a new

Muizzu travelled to Agra, as well as Mumbai and Bangalore as part of this trip where several meetings and events took place. *—PTI*

Cong forms fact finding team post Haryana polls

Congress President Mallikarjun Kharge with Leader of Opposition in Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi **PHOTO: PTI**

NEW DELHI, 10 OCT

The Congress top brass on Thursday held a review meeting on the party's shock defeat in Haryana Assembly polls and decided to form a fact-finding team that will speak to all its candidates to find out the reasons for the debacle.

Sources said the leaders during the meeting discussed the possible reasons for the "unexpected" results in Haryana and decided to set up the team to ascertain the reasons behind such results and also look into complaints of "discrepancies" in EVMs, as alleged by party candidates.

Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge, former party chief Rahul Gandhi, AICC general secretary organisation KC Venugopal, AICC senior observers for the polls Ashok Gehlot and Ajay Maken, as well as AICC secretaries for the state, participated in the review meeting.

AICC in-charge of Haryana Deepak Babaria joined the meeting online.

However, Haryana Congress chief Udai Bhan and CLP leader and former chief minister Bhupinder Singh Hooda, or any other senior leaders from the state were not called for the meeting. The fact-finding committee will be announced soon as is the convention in the party to analyse the results. *—PTI*

Kerala Assembly passes resolution against holding simultaneous polls

T'PURAM, 10 OCT

The resolution was moved on behalf of Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan by state Parliamentary Affairs Minister MB Rajesh **PHOTO: PTI**

The Kerala Assembly on Thursday unanimously passed a resolution urging the central government to roll back its decision to approve the proposal for 'one nation, one election' recommended by the Ramnath Kovind panel, saying that it was "undemocratic and unconstitutional".

The resolution was moved on behalf of Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan by state Parliamentary Affairs Minister MB Rajesh who said that the proposal would weaken the country's federal system and sabotage the diverse nature of India's parliamentary democracy.

He said that it would also lead to cutting short of the term of various state assemblies and local self-governments in the country.

The high-level committee had recommended simultaneous elections for the Lok Sabha and state assemblies as the first step, followed by synchronised local body polls within 100 days.

Rajesh further said that this decision amounted to a violation of the people's mandate, a challenge to their democratic rights and usurping of a state's power to hold elections and taking over of the federal system of the country.

He contended that the committee was viewing Lok Sabha, state assembly and local body polls as an expense and doing so was "undemocratic".

He said it was a "condemnable move" as there were other simpler ways to reduce election costs and make governance effective.

"This move is unconstitutional and against constitutional values as well as an attempt to implement the RSS and BJP agenda," Rajesh claimed. He also accepted certain amendments suggested by UDF MLAs in the resolution and subsequently, the resolution was passed unanimously by the House. *—PTI*

Kerala Guv wants Prez to look into gold smuggling

T'PURAM, 10 OCT

- VD Satheesan made the demand in a submission in the House where he contended that a magisterial court has ordered a probe against the CM on the complaint

Kerala Governor Arif Mohammed Khan, further intensifying his conflict with the Left government, on Thursday said he is gathering information to send a letter to the President of India regarding Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan's statement about large-scale gold smuggling through an airport in the state.

He said gold smuggling is a crime against the nation and the Chief Minister had kept him in the dark about such anti-national activities happening in the state.

"These are not routine matters. The Chief Minister never reported the issue to me. He himself had said that gold smuggling is a crime against the nation but he never reported this issue to me. He gave an explanation only after I wrote to him, saying that gold smuggling is being handled by the Customs and I should talk to the Central Government regarding this. He never told me this before," Governor said.

His statement came a day after the Chief Minister asserted that the responsibility for preventing gold smuggling lies with the Customs Department, which operates under the Union Finance Ministry, and not with the state government.

'Probe on plaint against instigating Left workers'

Meanwhile, Congress-led UDF Opposition demanded a fair probe into the complaint against Vijayan accusing him of making a speech instigating brutal assaults against Youth Congress members during the Nava Kerala Sadas outreach programme of the government last year. Leader of Opposition VD Satheesan made the demand where he contended that a magisterial court has ordered a probe against the CM on the complaint. *—PTI*

No corruption charge against Modi govt in 10 years: HM

NEW DELHI, 10 OCT

There has not been a single corruption charge in the last 10 years against the Modi government which ended policy paralysis and transformed India from one of the "Fragile Five" economies to a "bright spot", Union Home Minister Amit Shah said on Thursday.

Addressing the annual session of the PHD Chamber of Commerce and Industry here, Shah said by 2047, due to the "remarkable" initiatives taken by the Modi government, India will emerge as one of the most developed countries in the world. He said ever since Prime Minister Narendra Modi assumed charge in 2014, the government has brought reforms in various sectors resulting in upgradation, improved connectivity, digital economy, expansion of railway networks, setting up of manufacturing industries for semi-conductors, and electric vehicles. He said that the Modi government buried terrorism, Left-wing extremism and north-east insurgency "200 yards deep into the ground" *—PTI*

SP-Cong alliance to continue: Akhilesh

Samajwadi Party had announced candidates for six Assembly seats **PHOTO: PTI**

ETAWAH, 10 OCT

Samajwadi Party (SP) Chief Akhilesh Yadav on Thursday said his party's alliance with Congress will continue, a day after his party declared tickets for six of the 10 Uttar Pradesh Assembly seats where bypolls are due later this year.

Yadav's statement came while he was speaking to reporters during his visit to Uttar Pradesh's Etawah to pay tributes to his father and SP founder Mulayam Singh Yadav on his death anniversary.

Asked about distribution of party tickets for the bypolls, Akhilesh Yadav said, "I only want to say that INDIA bloc will be there. SP and Congress alliance will remain intact..."

He, however, did not elaborate and said this is not the time to discuss politics. On being asked about his reaction to Haryana poll results, he said, "We will discuss this when we meet again."

In an apparent snub to ally Congress after its unsatisfactory show in Haryana and Jammu and Kashmir assembly poll, the SP on Wednesday announced candidates for six assembly seats. The Congress has been demanding five seats in the bypolls.

A by-election is also due in Kundarki (Moradabad).

Congress, which was expected to make a comeback in Haryana, got 37 of the 90 seats as BJP won a third consecutive term with a score of 48.

Nine of these seats fell vacant after their respective MLAs were elected as MPs in the Lok Sabha polls, while in Sisamau, the bypoll is being held due to the disqualification of SP MLA Irfan Solanki, who was convicted in a criminal case. *—PTI*

HOME CONUNDRUM

AAP shared a picture of New Delhi Chief Minister Atishi working surrounded with boxes at her new residence on Thursday. Atishi accused BJP of attempting to encroach upon the "CM's residence" at 6, Flagstaff Road. BJP however responded by saying that AAP was indulging in a "new drama" and playing the "victim card" to gain sympathy **PHOTO: PTI**

RICH NETAS FOR 'AAM AADMI'

96% MLAs crorepatis in newly elected Haryana Assembly

NEW DELHI, 10 OCT

PHOTO: PTI

In the newly-elected 90-member Haryana Assembly, 96 per cent MLAs (86) are crorepatis, while 13 per cent (12) have criminal cases against them, according to an analysis by poll rights body ADR.

An analysis of the affidavits of all the 90 winning candidates by the Association for Democratic Reforms (ADR) and Haryana Election Watch show a slight rise in the number of crorepati MLAs, from 93 per cent in 2019 to 96 per cent this time.

Of the 90 MLAs, 44 per cent possess assets worth over Rs 10 crore, while only 2.2 per cent have assets below Rs 20 lakh, the data showed.

The average assets per winning candidate stand at Rs 24.97 crore, marking a handsome rise from Rs 18.29 crore in 2019. Party-wise, 96 per cent BJP legislators, 95 per cent Congress MLAs, and 100 per cent of both INLD and Independent winners have declared assets exceeding Rs 1 crore. Independent MLA from Hisar Savitri Jindal tops the list with assets totalling over Rs 270 crore, followed by BJP's Shakti Rani Sharma and Shruti Choudhry at Rs 145 crore and Rs 134 crore, respectively. The new House has 14 per cent women legislators, an increase from 10 per cent in 2019, while 66 per cent of the MLAs are aged between 51 and 80 years. *—PTI*

84% newly elected J&K MLAs are crorepatis: ADR

SRINAGAR, 10 OCT

PHOTO: PTI

A whopping 84 per cent of newly elected MLAs in Jammu and Kashmir are crorepatis, a 9 per cent increase from 2014, with average declared assets of Rs 11.43 crore, according to data compiled by the Association of Democratic Reforms (ADR).

The average declared assets of MLAs have more than doubled from Rs 4.56 crore a decade ago, the data showed.

Jammu and Kashmir Congress president Tariq Hamid Karra and BJP leader Devender Rana are among the richest MLAs with assets worth over Rs 100 crore.

76 MLAs in Jammu and Kashmir have declared assets of more than Rs 1 crore. In 2014, only 65 of 87 legislators (75 per cent) were crorepatis. Karra, who was elected from Central Shalteng seat, has declared assets worth Rs 148 crore and is the richest MLA in Jammu and Kashmir.

AAP's Mehraj Malik is the poorest legislator in Jammu and Kashmir with net assets of just Rs 29,070. NC's 42 MLAs have average assets of Rs 8.47 crore, the three PDP members have average assets of Rs 4.25 crore and the average net worth of the seven Independents is around Rs 5 crore. While 23 MLAs have assets worth more than Rs 10 crore, 26 have assets worth more than Rs 5 crore but less than Rs 10 crore. *—PTI*

LOVE POURS IN FOR RATAN

Jamshedpur mourns demise of Tata, who brought global recognition to backward region

RANCHI, 10 OCT

The city of Jamshedpur, popularly known as 'Tatanagar', is mourning. And so is Jharkhand where a day's mourning was declared on Thursday in a mark of respect for industrialist Ratan Tata.

Named after Tata Group's founding father Jamsetji Nusserwanji Tata, it was the timeless vision of Ratan Tata that propelled Jamshedpur's growth and put it on the global map. His contributions are considered significant towards shaping Jharkhand, a backward region that became a state in 2000.

He first visited Jamshedpur in 1963 to look into how Tata Steel, now a global conglomerate, works. He then visited the city in 1965 to hone his pilot skills.

Ratan Tata, who became the chairman of Tata Steel in 1993, visited the city regularly.

During the years he was active, never did he give a miss to the Founder's Day function, held on 3 March to mark the birth anniversary of Jamsetji.

His second last visit to Jamshedpur was in 2019 when the Meherbai Tata Memorial Hospital (MTMH) was upgraded.

The city-based Singhbhum Chamber of Commerce and Industry recalled his address in 2012.

He had said that traditionally a conservative business conglomerate, the Tatas have changed after the economic reforms in 1991, acquiring global brands and performing better than peers. His last visit to Jharkhand was during the 182nd Founder's Day celebrations in March 2021.

During that visit, he had inaugurated the academy building of Naval Tata Hockey Academy, GraphITI Centre - one of the world's largest single-site graphene production units with a capacity of 100 ton per annum -- at the Indian Steel and Wire Products Limited, and Tata Steel Gateway Structure.

It is Tata Steel that developed the country's first industrial city at Jamshedpur, which was a part of undivided Bihar.

The British were initially sceptical about the success of this enterprise, but the plant went on to become the principal supplier of steel and armoured vehicles to the Allied forces during World War I.

The British rewarded the Tata family by renaming Sakchi as Jamshedpur to honour the late Jamsetji. —*PTI*

Priests of Parsi, Muslim, Christian, Sikh and Hindu faith pray at Ratan Tata's prayer meeting held at the NCPA in Mumbai on Thursday ***PHOTO: SCREENGRAB***

Tata helped a painter display his work at Taj

Mumbai, 10 Oct

Amid the outpouring of emotions at NCPA, where the mortal remains of industrialist Ratan Tata have been kept, Nilesh Mohite choked up as he recalled how the philanthropist had got his work displayed at The Taj Mahal Palace hotel. In his 30s, Mohite is a painter who lives in a slum colony in south Mumbai. Mohite said he had met Tata before the Covid outbreak and gifted him a painting. Mohite said Tata gave him a cheque in an envelope to reciprocate the gesture but he declined and requested if he could be given a job instead. "Though the job did not materialise, he gave me an opportunity to showcase my paintings at the Taj Mahal Palace hotel in Colaba for a week," Mohite told —*PTI*

Tata's role in India's 1st civilian ascent of Everest

MUMBAI, 10 OCT

A group of young mountaineers from Maharashtra got together in 1997 to celebrate the 50th anniversary of Indian independence by climbing Mt Everest.

The expedition was arduous, but arranging resources to pull it off was a gargantuan task. Unable to fetch the required resources, they abandoned their attempt much before the 'climbing window' opened up to scale the highest peak in the world.

Having the required experience of success in high-altitude Himalayan ascents, the team kept at it and reached Tatas with a reference letter from the then Deputy Chairman of the Planning Commission and veteran socialist leader Madhu Dandavate.

What followed next was surreal. Within four days, they got a letter appreciating the effort undertaken by the youth and more importantly, a commitment to financial support.

Tata's backing was like "seed funding" to the expedition, which had the Tata Group name as the title sponsor, and it was this help which ensured that an Indian civilian expedition got success, Hrishikesh Yadav, the leader of the expedition said.

There were Indian summits on Everest dating back to 1965, but all of them were backed by the Indian Army or services, he said, explaining that the high costs of expeditions could not be undertaken by civilian or amateur mountaineers till then. —*PTI*

Ratan Tata's dog, Goa, which he had adopted, pays homage to him. The dog was seen sitting next to his casket ***PHOTO: SCREENGRAB***

SHANTANU NAIDU BIDS FAREWELL TO HIS 'LIGHTHOUSE'

MUMBAI, 10 OCT

Ratan Tata's trusted assistant, Shantanu Naidu, penned a heartfelt note for his friend, his 'dear lighthouse', as the nation mourned the loss of the national icon on Thursday.

"The hole that this friendship has now left with me, I will spend the rest of my life trying to fill," Naidu, a general manager in the Office of RNT said.

in the morning, everybody saw Naidu riding out of Tata's house on a Yezdi motorcycle, leading the truck carrying his boss' mortal remains.

The friendship between Shantanu Naidu and Ratan Tata flourished through their mutual affection for animals. They first connected in 2014 after Naidu created reflective collars to safeguard stray dogs from nighttime traffic accidents. Ratan Tata took notice of his efforts and extended an invitation for Naidu to join his team. Over the last 10 years, Naidu became a close and trusted friend to Ratan. —*PTI*

Ratan Tata with industrialist JJ Irani at the inauguration of the G Blast Furnace in Jamshedpur plant; An eldery person arrives to pay homage to Ratan; Shantanu Naidu (right) with Ratan Tata ***PHOTOS: PTI/ LINKEDIN***

Couple arrested for sacrificing child to cure disease in UP

MUZAFFARNAGAR, 10 OCT

A couple have been arrested for allegedly sacrificing their one-month-old girl child here, police said on Thursday. According to police, the mother, Mamta was ill for quite some time when the couple took an exorcist's advice to kill the child for curing her. The incident took place in Belda village of Bhopa area on Wednesday and the neighbours informed the police when they found the child missing. Mamta and her husband, Gopal Kashyap confessed that after killing their daughter they hid her body somewhere in a jungle. —*PTI*

Hathras stampede: Surajpal appears before panel

LUCKNOW, 10 OCT

Self-styled godman Surajpal alias 'Bhole Baba' on Thursday appeared before a judicial commission here probing the 2 July stampede at his congregation in Hathras which had claimed 121 lives. Surajpal, also known as Narayan Sakar Hari, is not mentioned as an accused in the FIR that was lodged after the stampede at Fulrai village in Sikandra Rao area of Hathras district. He is slated to record his statement before the commission. On 3 July, the Uttar Pradesh government had formed a three-member judicial commission headed by a retired high court judge to probe the Hathras tragedy and to look into the possibility of a conspiracy behind the stampede. This was separate from a police investigation launched into the case. The police had arrested 11 accused involved in organising the programme of the self-styled godman. —*PTI*

Muslim bodies spar over HP mosque razing

SHIMLA, 10 OCT

Two Muslim bodies in Himachal Pradesh are divided over the issue of demolition of three unauthorised storeys of the disputed mosque located in Sanjauli here.

The Shimla Municipal Commissioner's court had on 5 October ordered demolition of the three unauthorised stories of the five-storey mosque. It gave two months to the Waqf Board and the president of the mosque committee to execute the orders.

The All-Himachal Muslim's Organisation (AHMO) said it will challenge the order in the court of appellate authority and go to the Supreme Court if necessary while the Sanjauli mosque committee has already given its nod for demolition of the unauthorised portions.

The municipal commissioner's court had also observed that the mosque committee had itself offered to demolish the unauthorised portion.

On 12 September, a day after 10 people were injured during a protest demanding demolition, the Muslim welfare committee gave a representation to the municipal commissioner asking to seal an unauthorised portion of the mosque and said they will themselves demolish it. On Wednesday, AHMO state spokesperson Nazakat Ali Hashmi in a statement issued here said that the land belongs to the Waqf board. The mosque is 125 years old and the unauthorised storeys are not illegal. The approval of maps is lying with the authorities but the municipal commissioner's court ordered demolition of the storeys, he added. —*PTI*

ED TO NOT EVICT SHILPA, KUNDRA UNTIL HC HEARING

MUMBAI, 10 OCT

ED told the Bombay High Court on Thursday that it would not act upon the eviction notices issued to actor Shilpa Shetty and her husband Raj Kundra till their application challenging a property attachment order is heard and decided by an appellate tribunal.

On 27 September, Enforcement Directorate (ED) issued notices to Shetty and her businessman husband, directing them to vacate their house in Mumbai's Juhu area and a farmhouse in Pune in connection with a money laundering case.

The duo challenged the same in the High Court, terming it as arbitrary, illegal and uncalled for. A division bench of Justices Revati Mohite Dere and Prithviraj Chavan had on Wednesday asked the ED what was the urgency to issue an eviction notice after the attachment order was passed when the couple has a legal remedy to appeal against the order. —*PTI*

4 BOOKED

Cybercrime in Laos: NIA files chargesheet trafficking gang

NEW DELHI, 10 OCT

National Investigation Agency (NIA) filed a chargesheet against members of a human trafficking gang that was sending Indians to Laos to work in cybercrime sweatshops run by Chinese scammers targeting European and American citizens, officials said on Thursday.

The agency filed its chargesheet before a special court on Wednesday against gang members Manjoor Alam alias Guddu, Sahil, Ashish alias Akhil, Pawan Yadav alias Afzal alias Afroz, along with the key conspirator, Kamran Haider alias Zaidi.

"NIA investigations have revealed that all five were involved in trafficking vulnerable Indian youth to the Golden Triangle Region in Lao PDR where they were forced to commit cyber scams targeting European and American citizens. They operated through the consultancy firm, Alli International Services, which functioned as a front for human trafficking," an NIA spokesperson said in a statement. According to the agency's investigation, Zaidi facilitated the entire operation and extorted money through crypto currency wallets from the victims who tried to escape from the clutches of the Chinese scammers. —*PTI*

PORSCHE CRASH: 2 FROM JUVENILE PANEL FIRED

PUNE, 10 OCT

Maharashtra government has terminated the services of two members of the Juvenile Justice Board (JJB) here in the bail given to a juvenile accused in the Pune Porsche crash case, officials said on Thursday.

A probe panel of the state Women and Child Development (WCD) Department had recommended action against the two members - LN Danwade and Kavita Thorat - for alleged "procedural lapses, misconduct and non-compliance with norms".

On 19 May, two IT professionals were killed in Kalyani Nagar area of Pune after their motorcycle was hit by a speeding Porsche car allegedly driven by a 17-year-old boy in an inebriated condition.

The case caused a national uproar after then JJB member Danwade granted bail to the accused, son of a builder, on very lenient terms, including writing a 300-word essay on road safety. —*PTI*

15-20% DROP

Protests hit WB eateries, revenue slumps

KOLKATA, 10 OCT

As protests continue in Kolkata over the RG Kar rape-murder incident, the food and beverage industry in the eastern metropolis has seen a significant slump in sales. Several restaurant owners claiming they registered a 15-20 per cent drop in revenue over the past month as many people chose not to engage in fine dining in solidarity with the agitation.

The restaurant owners said that many of the patrons were themselves busy agitating on the streets, while others were apprehensive of eating out amid the protests.

However, with the commencement of Durga pooja festivities, restaurant and cafe owners hope that business will pick up as patrons are returning.

Sudip Mallick, owner of Bonne Femme cafe, told PTI, "Turnout of patrons had dwindled during evening hours on weekdays for over a month, except on weekends. But since Monday, October 2 (the day of Mahalaya), the 46-seater place has been recording 100 per cent occupancy." "Continuing agitation reflected the discontent and anger in people's minds. While the buzz in the market is typically felt a month before the festival in other years, this year the situation is different," he added. Mallick, who also operates the specialty restaurant 'Sabeki' and the flagship Balaram Mallick Radharaman Mallick sweet shop, claimed that the number of tourists visiting the city during the Durga Pooja season has significantly decreased compared to previous years.

Restaurant owners said that many of the patrons were busy agitating on the streets ***PHOTO: PTI***

Siddhartha Gupta, co-founder of Traffic Gastropub, said, "The protest have hit different parts of the city we have noticed a dip in footfall during our Happy Hour and late-night hours." —*PTI*

3 UP Dalit boys thrashed, paraded over alleged theft

BAHRAICH, 10 OCT

Two poultry farm owners allegedly thrashed three Dalit boys, suspecting them of stealing 5kg wheat, and paraded them with shaved heads and blackened faces in a village here, police said.

The victims' families claimed the duo tortured the boys as they did not report at the poultry farm for work.

The incident was reported on Tuesday from Tajpur Tedia village under the Nanpara police station limits of Uttar Pradesh's Bahraich district, they said.

The accused allegedly thrashed the three boys, aged 12-14 years, shaved their heads, blackened their faces, wrote 'thief' on their forearms, and paraded them around the village with their hands tied, according to police.

Nanpara SHO Pradeep Singh said based on a complaint by the victims' family members, a case was registered on Wednesday against four accused people-- Nazim Khan, Qasim Khan, Inayat and Sanu -- under relevant sections of Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita and SC/ST Atrocities Prevention Act.

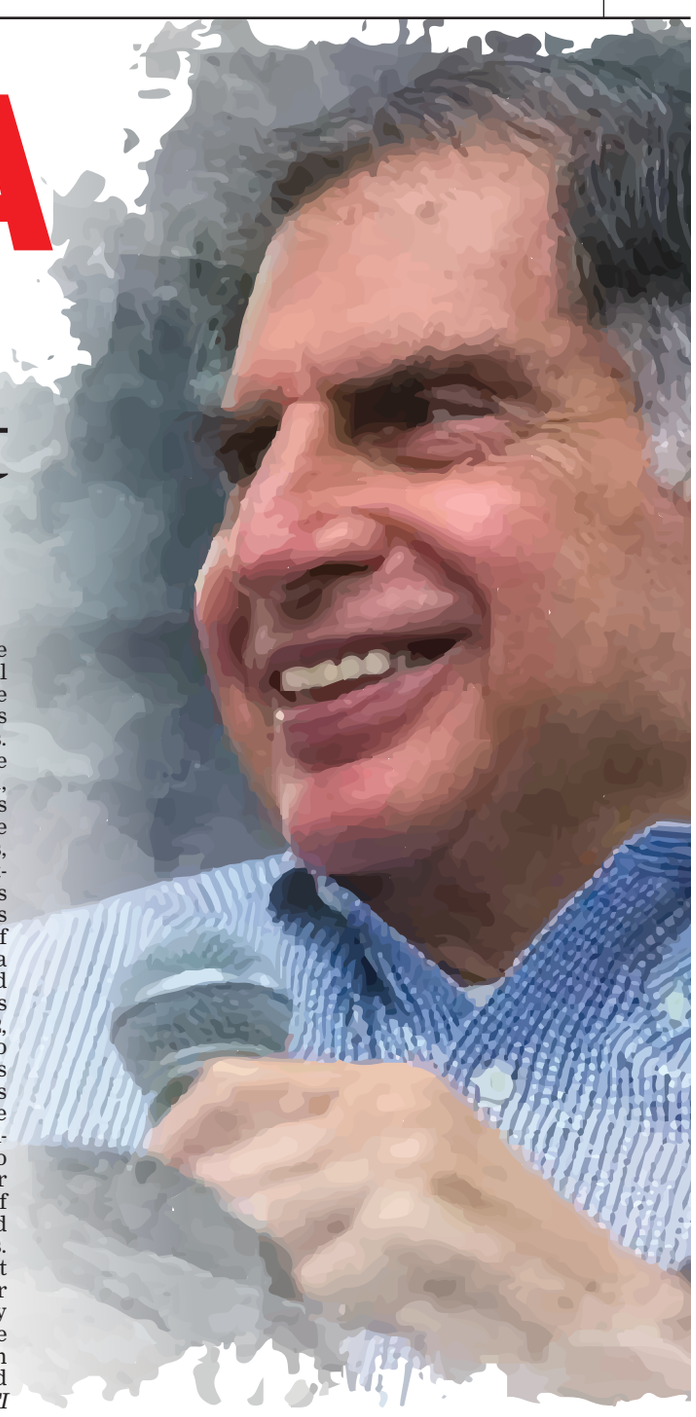
Sanu, a former village head, is absconding, while the remaining three have been arrested, Singh said.

The accused even filmed the act on their mobile phones, the villagers claimed. —*PTI*

RATAN TATA

Part corporate titan, part secular living saint

Tata Group under Ratan grew over 70 times, ending the fiscal year in March with $165B



NEW DELHI, 10 OCT

He was one of the world's most influential industrialists yet he never appeared on any list of billionaires. He controlled over 30 companies that operated in over 100 countries across six continents yet lived an unpretentious life.

Ratan Naval Tata enjoyed a perhaps unique status, a corporate titan who was considered a 'secular living saint' with a reputation for decency and integrity.

Born in a traditional Parsi family in 1937, Ratan Tata was brought up by his grandmother after his parents, Naval and Sooni Tata, divorced when he was 10. Tata joined the family firm after acquiring a BS in architecture from Cornell University, Ithaca, New York, in 1962.

He became chairman of Tata Industries in 1991, took over as the chairman of the Tata Group from his uncle, JRD, who had been in charge for more than half a century.

This was the year when India opened its economy and Tata soon turned the group, which began as a small textile and trading firm in 1868, into a global powerhouse with operations stretching from salt to steel, cars to software, power plants and airlines.

As chairman for more than two decades, he took the staid group global, clinching eye-catching deals, including iconic British assets like steelmaker Corus, luxury carmaker Jaguar Land Rover and the world's second-largest tea company Tetley.

Owning less than 1 per cent of the group that bears his family name, Tata Group under him grew over 70 times, ending the fiscal year in March 2024 with USD 165 billion in revenue. Today, the group makes everything from coffee to cars, salt to software, and steel to power, runs airlines and introduced India's first super app. It recently forayed into chip making and is planning an iPhone assembly plant.Along with being one of India's most successful business tycoons, he is also known for his philanthropic activities. His personal involvement in philanthropy began early.

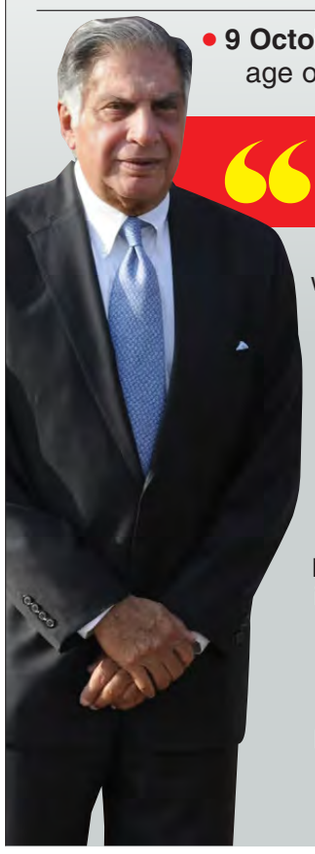
In the 1970s, he initiated The Aga Khan Hospital and Medical College project, laying the foundation of one of India's premier healthcare institutions. After his appointment as the chairman of Tata Sons in 1991, Tata's philanthropic efforts gained new momentum. He actively steered the Tata Trusts, established by his great-grandfather Jamsetji, towards addressing vital social needs and set up institutes of excellence like the Tata Institute of Social Sciences and funded educational initiatives across India. In December 2012, he ceded control of Tata Sons to Cyrus Mistry, who was his deputy then. But the owners had problems with the functioning of the first non-Tata family member, leading to the ouster of Mistry in October 2016. Tata was said to be one of the shareholders who disagreed with Mistry on several projects. One wet monsoon evening not many moons ago, dog-lover Tata had decreed that any strays outside the conglomerate's HQ in downtown Mumbai be allowed shelter. *—PTI*

Who will carry forward Tata's legacy?

The death of Ratan Tata, the chairman emeritus of the Tata Group, has created a leadership void within the philanthropic entities that oversee the conglomerate. With no designated successor, the Tata Trusts, the primary shareholders of Tata Sons, are now tasked with appointing a new chairman. The Sir Dorabji Tata Trust and Sir Ratan Tata Trust, together holding nearly 52 per cent of Tata Sons. Speculation has intensified over who will take on the mantle of chairman, a role crucial for maintaining continuity and direction within the conglomerate. Among the potential candidates are Venu Srinivasan, an industrialist from TVS, and Vijay Singh, a former defence secretary, both serving as vice-chairmen of the Trusts. While they have been involved in governance since 2018, their chances of assuming the top position seem limited. A more likely contender is Noel Tata, Ratan Tata's half-brother and chairman of Trent. At 67, his appointment would align with the Parsi community's tradition of family leadership. With over four decades of experience within the Tata Group, Noel's candidacy is gaining significant traction. Noel is vice chairman of Tata Steel and watch company Titan. Ratan Tata's younger brother Jimmy is not involved in the family business and lives in a modest two-bedroom apartment in Colaba. *—Agencies*

Tata's journey from assistant to a global icon

- **1937:** Ratan Tata is born to Sooni and Naval Tata
- **1955:** Leaves for Cornell University (Ithaca, New York, USA) at 17 to study architecture and engineering
- **1962:** Joins as an assistant in Tata Industries, spends six months training at the Jamshedpur plant of Tata Motors
- **1963:** Moves to Tata Iron and Steel Company, or Tisco (now called Tata Steel), at its Jamshedpur facility
- **1965:** Is appointed technical officer in Tisco's engineering division
- **1971:** Is named director-in-charge of National Radio and Electronics (Nelco)
- **1974:** Joins Tata Sons board as a director
- **1981:** Is appointed Chairman of Tata Industries
- **1983:** Drafts the Tata strategic plan. Launches Tata Salt, India's first national branded salt.
- **1986:** Appointed Chairman of Air India, a position he held until 1989
- **25 March, 1991:** Takes over from JRD Tata as Chairman of Tata Sons and Tata trusts. Begins restructuring the Tata group coinciding with liberalisation of the economy
- **1998:** Tata Motors launches Tata Indica, the first car designed and manufactured in India. The company also introduces the Tata Safari, India's first SUV
- **2000:** Tata Tea acquires the UK-based Tetley Tea for $450 million, 1st Indian company to take over a British brand
- **2006:** Tata ventures into the Direct-to-Home television market by launching TataSky
- **2008:** Awarded the Padma Vibhushan, the country's second-highest civilian honour. Launches Tata Nano, India's cheapest car priced at Rs 1 lakh. Acquires Jaguar and Land Rover from the Ford Motor Company
- **December 2012:** Steps down as Chairman of Tata Sons after 50 years with the Tata group; is appointed Chairman Emeritus of Tata Sons
- **2020,** Tata Sons and Tata Trusts pledged Rs 1,500 crore to support India's fight against Covid-19
- **9 October, 2024:** Dies at the age of 86



His words of wisdom

If you want to walk fast, walk alone. But if you want to walk far, walk together.

***

The biggest risk is not taking any risk. In a world that is changing quickly, the only strategy that is guaranteed to fail is not taking risks

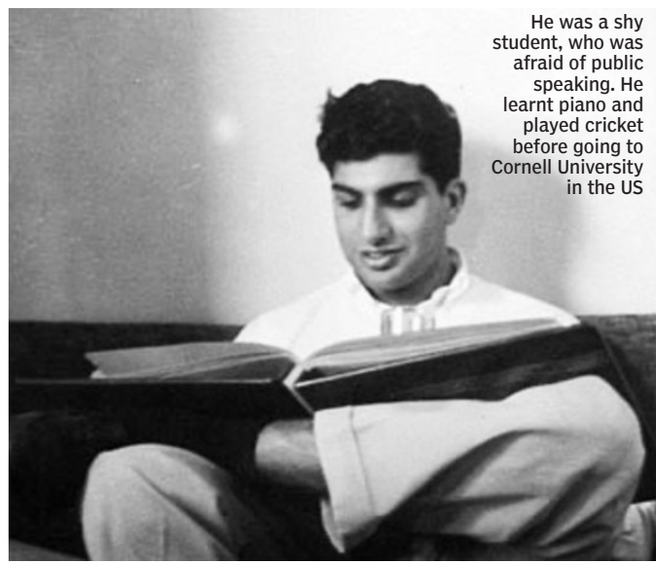
***

None can destroy iron, but its own rust can. Likewise, none can destroy a person, but their own mindset can

***

Be persistent and resilient in the face of challenges, for they are the building blocks of success

Ratan Tata with the first 'Tata Indica' car launched in 1998.

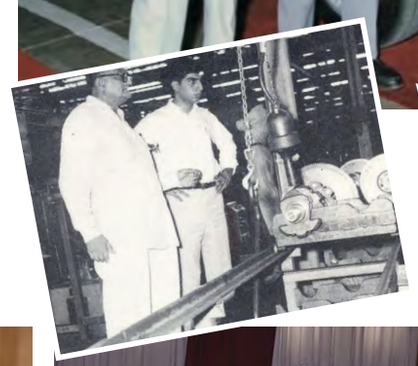


He was a shy student, who was afraid of public speaking. He learnt piano and played cricket before going to Cornell University in the US

Ratan Tata with his brother Jimmy from their childhood

Ratan Tata sitting with his adopted Bombay House dogs in Goa. His last project months before he died was a hospital for animals in Mumbai

Ratan Tata with uncle JRD Tata. Though he had a job offer from IBM, the then-chief JRD persuaded him to work for Tata Sons

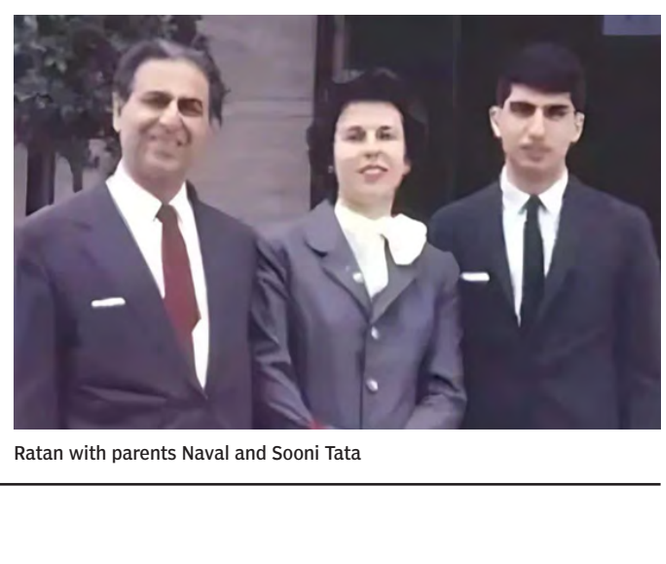


He started working on the shop floor of Telco (now Tata Motors) in 1962 where he shoveled limestone and was a team member in the blast furnaces

Ratan Tata sits in the cockpit of an F16 fighter plane during the Aero India 2011, India's biggest air show, at Yelahanka Air base in Bengaluru. His love for fast cars and planes was well-known and he was also a scuba diving enthusiast ***PHOTOS: PTI/X/TATA GROUP***

Ratan Tata was awarded Padma Vibhushan by the then president Pratibha Patil in 2008

Left to right: JRD Tata, Ratan Tata, JJ Irani at a Tata Iron and Steel Company Limited (TISCO) board meeting in 1993



Ratan with parents Naval and Sooni Tata

PHOTO: X/ @ANTONIOGUTERRES

Tom Fletcher is new UN humanitarian chief

UNITED NATIONS, 10 OCT

Secretary-General António Guterres on Wednesday appointed former British diplomat Tom Fletcher as the new UN humanitarian chief. Fletcher, who is currently principal of Hertford College, Oxford and vice chair of Oxford University's Conference of Colleges, succeeds fellow Briton Martin Griffiths, who stepped down for health reasons as undersecretary-general for humanitarian affairs at the end of June. UN deputy spokesman Farhan Haq, who announced the appointment, said acting UN humanitarian chief Joyce Msuya will remain in the job until Fletcher takes over at a future date. He was a mediator on Northern Ireland and held diplomatic posts in Africa, the Middle East and Europe. *—PTI*

2 cops killed as militants ambush vehicle in Pak

PESHAWAR, 10 OCT

At least two policemen were killed and three injured as suspected militants attacked a police van on patrolling duty in Pakistan's restive northwestern Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province on Thursday. The militants ambushed the police van near Pathan Kot in Tank district. The deceased and the injured have been shifted to the District Headquarters Hospital. The police have launched a search operation to arrest the accused. No group has claimed responsibility for the attack so far. Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Chief Minister Ali Amin Khan Gandapur strongly condemned the firing on the police van and expressed condolences over the death of two police officers. He announced financial assistance for the families of the slain policemen. *—PTI*

China to lift 4-year ban on Australian lobster imports

MELBOURNE, 10 OCT

China will resume importing Australian live lobsters by the end of the year, removing the final major obstacle to bilateral trade that once cost Australian exporters more than USD 13 billion a year, Australia's prime minister said Thursday. Prime Minister Anthony Albanese made the announcement after meeting Premier Li Qiang on the sidelines of a Southeast Asian summit in Vientiane, Laos. The ban on lobsters was the last of a series of official and unofficial trade barriers that Beijing has agreed to lift since Albanese's centre-left Labour Party government was elected in 2022. Albanese has given assurances that relations with China have been improved without compromising Australian interests. *—PTI*

Taiwan marks Nat'l Day holiday amid Chinese threats

TAIPEI, 10 OCT

Taiwan celebrated its National Day holiday Thursday against the background of threats from China, which claims the self-governing island republic as its own territory. The celebration marks the establishment of the Republic of China, which overthrew the Qing Dynasty in 1911 and fled to Taiwan as Mao Zedong's Communists swept to power on the mainland during a civil war in 1949. Taiwan was run under martial law until transitioning to full democracy in the 1980s and 1990s but maintains the original constitution brought from China and the ROC flag. President Lai Ching-te took office in May, continuing the eight-year rule of the Democratic Progressive Party that rejects China's demand that it recognises Taiwan is a part of China. *—PTI*

4 dead as hurricane Milton hits Florida

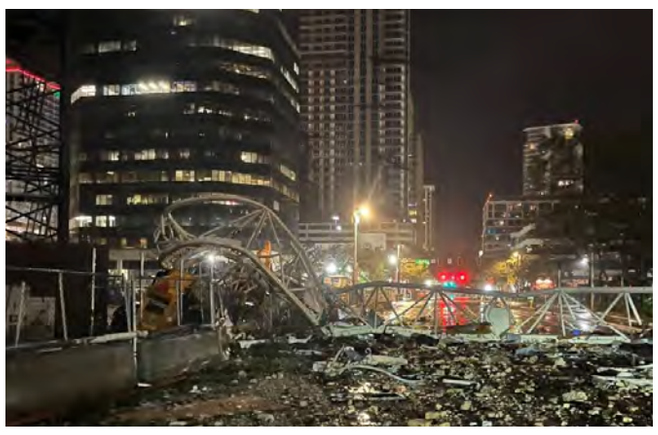
Around 3 million are left without power, evacuation orders issued for 15 Florida counties

TAMPA, 10 OCT

Hurricane Milton plowed into Florida as a Category 3 storm, bringing misery to a coast still ravaged by Helene, pounding cities with winds of over 160 kph after producing a barrage of tornadoes, but sparing Tampa a direct hit. It caused at least four deaths and compounded the misery wrought by Helene while sparing Tampa a direct hit.

The storm tracked to the south in the final hours and made landfall Wednesday night in Siesta Key near Sarasota, about 112km south of Tampa. The situation in the Tampa area was still a major emergency as St. Petersburg recorded over 41cm of rain, prompting the National Weather Service to warn of flash flooding there as well as other parts of western and central Florida.

The storm knocked out power across a large section of Florida, with more than 3 million homes and businesses without power as of early Thursday, according to poweroutage.us, which tracks utility reports.



A crane collapsed overnight in St Petersburg following hurricane Milton on Thursday *PHOTO: X*

"We have lost some life," St. Lucie County Sheriff Keith Kevin Guthrie, the director of the Florida Division of Emergency Management.

Heavy rains were also likely to cause flooding inland along rivers and lakes as Milton traverses the Florida Peninsula as a hurricane, eventually to emerge in the Atlantic Ocean. It is expected to impact the heavily populated Orlando area.

Some said the time had passed for such efforts, suggesting that people who stayed behind hunker down instead. By the evening, some counties announced they had suspended emergency services.

Authorities issued mandatory evacuation orders across 15 Florida counties with a total population of about 7.2 million people. Officials warned that anyone staying behind must fend for themselves, because first responders were not expected to risk their lives attempting rescues at the height of the storm. *—PTI*

Pearson told WPBF News, though he wouldn't say how many people were killed.

About 125 homes were destroyed before the hurricane came ashore, many of them mobile homes in communities for senior citizens, said

Biden condemns lies about storm response

WASHINGTON, 10 OCT

Joe Biden *PHOTO: PTI*

President Joe Biden on Wednesday blasted his predecessor for spreading an "onslaught of lies" about how the federal government is handling the damage from Hurricane Helene as another hurricane, Milton, was on the verge of making landfall in Florida.

"Quite frankly, these lies are un-American," Biden said from the White House. "Former President Trump has led this onslaught of lies."

Biden said that Trump, his allies have misrepresented the response of the Federal Emergency Management Agency. He singled out Rep. Marjorie Taylor Greene, R-Georgia, who claimed the federal government could control the weather. He talked about the potential damage from Hurricane Milton and encouraged people near its path to seek shelter. Biden said the government had staged 20 million meals and 40 million litres of water in anticipation of the storm and that military units were ready with search and rescue teams to help victims of it. *—PTI*

Russian strike kills 7, injures 10 in latest attack on Ukrainian port

KYIV/ LONDON, 10 OCT

At least seven people were killed and more than 10 injured in a Russian missile attack Wednesday in Ukraine's southern Odesa region, said an official.

Odesa Governor Oleh Kiper said earlier on Telegram that "the enemy hit a Panama-flagged civilian container ship. As a result of the attack, six people died, eight were injured, and four of them are in serious condition."

All of those affected are receiving necessary assistance, Kiper said. He said it was the third such attack in four days.

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy with British Prime Minister Keir Starmer on Thursday *PHOTO: PTI*

Zelenskyy to meet UK and NATO leaders

Ukraine's President Volodymyr Zelenskyy arrived at 10 Downing St in London on Thursday for talks with the leaders of Britain and NATO on his "victory plan" for the war against Russia.

Zelenskyy will be holding talks with Prime Minister Keir Starmer and NATO Secretary-General Mark Rutte, before traveling to Paris for talks with President Emmanuel Macron. Zelenskyy says he will also meet the leaders of Germany and Italy this week to discuss the plan. He had been due to present his blueprint at a weekend meeting of Western leaders and defense ministers in Germany, but it has been postponed because US President Joe Biden said he had to stay home to respond to Hurricane Milton' s landfall. *—Agencies*

FIRST IN NEPAL

First same sex marriage being performed between a Nepali citizen and a US citizen in Kathmandu *PHOTO: PTI*

WAR RAGES ON

Israeli strike at Gaza shelter kills at least 27

Several people were wounded in the recent Israeli strike *PHOTO: PTI*

DEIR AL-BALAH, 10 OCT

An Israeli strike on a school sheltering displaced people in Gaza killed at least 27 people on Thursday, with the toll likely to rise, Palestinian medical officials said.

Israel has continued to strike at what it says are militant targets across the Palestinian enclave even as attention has shifted to its war against Hezbollah in Lebanon and rising tensions with Iran. It launched a large-scale air and ground operation against Hamas in northern Gaza earlier this week.

The Al-Aqsa Martyrs Hospital, where the bodies were brought, confirmed the toll from the strike in the central town of Deir al-Balah. It said several other people were wounded in the strike. Israel has repeatedly attacked schools-turned-shelters in Gaza, accusing militants of hiding out there.

Hamas militants stormed into Israel and rampaged through army bases and farming communities in that attack, killing some 1,200 people, mostly civilians, and abducting around 250 others. They are still holding around 100 captives, a third of whom are believed to be dead. The war has destroyed large areas of Gaza and displaced around 90 per cent of its population of 2.3 million people. *—PTI*

5 paramedics killed in Lebanon

Beirut, 10 Oct

An Israeli airstrike hit a Lebanese Civil Defence centre in Dardghaya in southern Lebanon, killing five members civil defence spokesperson Elie Khairallah said. Israel has "renewed its targeting of rescue crews disregarding international laws, and humanitarian conventions", a statement said.

Houthis target ship in Red Sea in fresh attacks

DUBAI, 10 OCT

A series of suspected attacks by Yemen's Houthi rebels targeted a ship on Thursday in the Red Sea, authorities said.

The attack comes as the rebels continue to threaten ships moving through the Red Sea, a waterway that once saw USD 1 trillion in goods move through it a year, over the ongoing conflicts in the Mideast stemming from the Israel-Hamas war in the Gaza Strip.

A ship in the Red Sea skirting the coast of the East Africa found itself struck first by a projectile that damaged the vessel, but sparked no fire and caused no injuries, the British military's United Kingdom Maritime Trade Operations center said. The private security firm Ambrey identified the ship as a Liberian-flagged chemical tanker.

At least two more projectiles later fell in the waters around the vessel, which was a distance away from Hodeida, the Houthi-controlled port from which many of the rebels' attacks have been launched.

The rebels did not immediately claim the attack. However, it can take them hours or even days to acknowledge their assaults. *—PTI*

Prioritise elderly care, says China's Xi

BEIJING, 10 OCT

Chinese President Xi Jinping on Thursday directed his party to focus on the country's rapidly growing population of the elderly, whose numbers touched 300 million, adding to the demographic crises accentuated by falling marriage and birth rates.

China's population aged 60 years and above approached 300 million by the end of 2023. Projections suggest it will exceed 400 million by 2035 and reach 500 million by 2050, state-run Xinhua news agency reported on Thursday.

Greeting the elderly people on the eve of the country's Seniors' Day, which falls on Friday, Xi urged the ruling Communist Party committees and governments at all levels to prioritise work related to the elderly.

The rising numbers of the Chinese elderly, who had to endure the strictly enforced decades-old one-child policy, are mostly dependent on state social security support putting pressure on the state finances amid the flagging economy. China revised the population policy in 2021 allowing people to have three children in an attempt to address the reluctance of couples to have more kids due to mounting costs. *—PTI*

SL economy stabilised, says World Bank

COLOMBO, 10 OCT

Aided by critical structural and policy reforms, the Sri Lankan economy has stabilised after the deep crisis it suffered in 2022 with growth in 2024 expected to be 4.4 per cent up from the previous projections, the World Bank said on Thursday.

"The good news is that it grew faster than most expected but the not so good news is that it is not out of the woods yet," World Bank country director Gevorg Sargsyan told reporters.

Sri Lanka declared its first-ever sovereign default in mid-April 2022, the first since gaining independence from Britain in 1948.

The island nation is currently in negotiations with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) for the next tranche of the USD 2.9 billion bailout package for which the IMF has made external debt restructuring conditional.

The third tranche of the bailout package was released in mid-June as the Washington-headquartered global lender said on 2 August that Sri Lanka's economic reform programme has yielded good results. Sargsyan said the four quarters of growth in 2023 were remarkable achievements. *—PTI*

Trump-Putin in spotlight after book claims 'calls'

WASHINGTON, 10 OCT

A new book's assertion that former President Donald Trump may have had as many as seven private phone calls with Russian President Vladimir Putin since leaving the White House has refocused attention on their politically fraught relationship and on Trump's sustained dialogue with world leaders as he seeks a return to power.

It's not surprising in and of itself that an ex-president would preserve ties with foreign counterparts. But the detail in journalist Bob Woodward's book "War" raised eyebrows in light of a special counsel investigation during Trump's presidency that examined potential ties between Russia and the Republican's 2016 campaign as well as Trump's more recent criticism of US aid to Ukraine as it fends off Russia's invasion — statements that have hinted at a possible US policy overhaul if he's elected.

"I would caution any world leader about trusting Vladimir Putin with anything," said Emily Harding, who led the Senate Intelligence Committee's investigation into 2016 Russian election interference and is now a national security expert at the Centre for Strategic and International Studies. Both Trump campaign and Kremlin, which US have said is working to influence the 2024 poll in favour of Trump, denied the reporting. The meetings offer Trump an opportunity to differentiate his foreign policy approach from that of President Joe Biden and Vice President Kamala Harris and to shore up connections if he reclaims the White House. *—PTI*

WWF REPORT

Wildlife numbers plunge 73% in 50 years

VAUD, 10 OCT

Habitat loss and degradation, driven primarily by food systems, is the biggest threat to wildlife populations around the world *PHOTO: FREEPIK*

Wildlife populations across the globe have shrunk by more than 70 percent over the past half-century, according to the World-Wide Fund for Nature (WWF).

The conservation charity published a stocktake on Thursday, assessing more than 5,000 species of mammals, birds, amphibians, reptiles and fish, warning that habitats like the Amazon rainforest were reaching "tipping points", with potentially "catastrophic consequences" for "most species".

The Living Planet Report found the 35,000 populations under review had fallen 73 percent since 1970, mostly due to human pressures. The biggest decline was recorded in populations of freshwater species, followed by terrestrial and marine vertebrates.

Among the snapshots provided, the report found that the population of pink river and tucuxi dolphins in the Brazilian state of Amazonas declined by 65 percent and 57 percent respectively as a result of hunting, with climate change also threatening their survival.

Habitat loss and degradation, driven primarily by food systems, is the biggest threat to wildlife populations around the world, followed by overexploitation, invasive species and disease.

Other threats include climate change, in particular in Latin America and the Caribbean, and pollution, notably in North America, Asia and the Pacific.

"The good news is that we're not yet past the point of no return," said Kirsten Schuijt, director-general of WWF International. She pointed to global efforts including a breakthrough pact adopted at the last United Nations meeting on biodiversity in 2022 to protect 30 percent of the planet by 2030 from pollution, degradation and climate change. Some populations have stabilised or even expanded, due to conservation efforts and the reintroduction of species.

—Courtesy, Al Jazeera

Rupee rises 1 paisa to 83.95 against US dollar

MUMBAI, 10 OCT

The rupee rose 1 paisa to 83.95 against the US dollar in early trade on Thursday amid a firm trend in domestic equity markets and a weaker greenback against major overseas rivals. However, an increase in global oil prices and heavy foreign fund outflows capped further recovery in the domestic currency, according to forex experts. At the interbank foreign exchange, the rupee opened at 83.95, marginally up by 1 paisa against the US dollar, and traded almost flat in early deals. The local unit had settled at 83.96 against the greenback on Wednesday. The Reserve Bank of India's (RBI) decision to keep policy rates unchanged also played a part in the rupee's range-bound movement. The RBI had kept policy rate unchanged for the tenth time in a row but shifted its stance from "withdrawal of accommodation" to "neutral" that may lead to cut in forthcoming policies. *—PTI*

Gold falls ₹350 to ₹77,350/10 gms; silver rises ₹300

NEW DELHI, 10 OCT

Gold prices declined Rs 350 to Rs 77,350 per 10 grams in the national capital on Thursday due to tepid demand from local jewellers and retailers, according to the All India Sarafa Association. The precious metal had closed at Rs 77,700 per 10 grams on Wednesday. However, silver prices appreciated by Rs 300 to Rs 91,500 per kg. In the previous session, it had settled at Rs 91,200 per kg, according to the association. Continuing its slide for the third day in local markets, gold of 99.5 per cent purity declined Rs 350 to Rs 76,950 per 10 grams. Gold has declined Rs 1,350 per 10 grams in the past three sessions since 8 October. Traders attributed the fall in gold prices to subdued demand from local jewellers and stockists. *—PTI*

MHI seeks inputs on plaints against Ola Electric

NEW DELHI, 10 OCT

The Ministry of Heavy Industries (MHI) has directed the Automotive Research Association of India (ARAI) to provide detailed inputs regarding consumer complaints against Ola Electric. Ola Electric is a beneficiary of the FAME II and PM E-DRIVE schemes and its eligibility certificate has been provided by ARAI, a certification and testing agency under the administrative control of the Ministry. On 7 October, the Central Consumer Protection Authority issued a show cause notice to Ola Electric for alleged violation of consumer rights, misleading advertisement and unfair trade practices. As per FAME II and PM E-DRIVE schemes, original equipment manufacturers (OEMs) are required to maintain service centres to address customer issues. Further, warranty is also provided under these two schemes by all OEMs including Ola Electric. *—PTI*

Suzlon Group secures 400 MW wind power deal

NEW DELHI, 10 OCT

Suzlon Group on Thursday said the company has secured a 400 megawatt (MW) wind power deal from Jindal Renewables Power. It will set up the wind project in the Koppal region of Karnataka, the Group said in a statement. "Suzlon Group is set to contribute to decarbonisation of the hard-to-abate sectors by harnessing the power of wind through a significant 400 MW order from JSP Green Wind 1 Pvt Ltd (SPV of Jindal Renewables Power Private Limited)," it said. The power generated will be used for captive consumption at steel plants of Jindal Steel and Power located at Chhattisgarh and Odisha, Suzlon said without disclosing the exact value of the multi-crore order. *—PTI*

India Inc mourns Tata, titan of industry

Ratan Tata is known for shaping the country's industrial and philanthropic landscape

NEW DELHI, 10 OCT

Industry leaders on Thursday mourned the death of Ratan Tata saying with his demise India has lost a visionary who shaped its industrial and philanthropic landscape.

Tata was a truly remarkable business leader who placed the country before business interests, and whose vision was truly transformational for a country and its people, TVS Motor Co Chairman Emeritus Venu Srinivasan said in a statement.

"Mr Tata was a truly remarkable business leader, the likes of whom nations get only once in a century," he added.

Similarly, State Bank of India Chairman CS Setty said Tata shaped the country's industrial and philanthropic landscape.

"His leadership at Tata Sons redefined corporate responsibility and innovation, positioning the Tata Group as a global force while remaining rooted in ethics," Setty said.

Aditya Birla Group Chairman Kumar Mangalam Birla said India and the country's industry have lost a true visionary with the passing away of Tata.

Birla said Tata's decisions have impacted lives and industries far beyond financial metrics. In a similar vein, Bharti Enterprises Founder & Chairman Sunil Bharti Mittal said Tata leaves behind "an astronomical imprint on the Indian industry, philanthropy, and the perennial zest to better the world we live in". *—PTI*

Ratan Tata with Indian industrialist Jamshed J Godrej, chat during a business meeting in Calcutta, on January 4, 1995 **PHOTO: PTI**

> We, at Hyundai Motor India Ltd, are deeply saddened by the passing of Mr. Ratan Tata. His visionary leadership and contributions to the Indian industry have left a lasting legacy.
> -Unsoo Kim, Hyundai MD

> India has lost a pioneer, but not his legacy. His influence will forever be a source of inspiration for BSE, as we work towards a thriving and inclusive marketplace. His legacy will continue to guide the country.
> -Bombay Stock Exchange

> He was a visionary global business leader as well as a cherished partner. His legacy inspires us as Tata Sons and the airline continue their collaboration on the Vistara-Air India merger.
> -Goh Phong, Singapore Airlines CEO

> In the passing of Ratan Tata, we have not only lost the jewel in the crown of Indian industry but also a man whose vision and outstanding personal qualities made him an icon for every Indian.
> -Anil Agarwal, Vedanta Chairman

> Tata's passing marks the end of an era. He will always be remembered as a leader who left a lasting mark on the evolution of the Tata Group. Mistry family has had a long standing relationship with Tata.
> -Shapoorji Mistry, SP Group Chairman

Humiliation led to Jaguar & Land Rover acquisition

MUMBAI, 10 OCT

The story of two iconic brands Jaguar and Land Rover entering the Tata stable began with an insult Ratan Tata couldn't bear.

Back in 1998, the legendary industrialist launched his dream project, Tata Indica -- India's first hatchback with a diesel engine. But sales initially were slow and Tata Motors decided to sell off its fledgling car business within a year of its debut. US auto giant Ford was seen as an ideal candidate. The company acceded to a meeting requirement from Ford Motors. Tata and his team flew to Detroit to meet Bill Ford, then the chairman of Ford.

However he was "humiliated". This made Ratan more focused on his goals. He decided not to sell the unit. Nine years later, Ford was on the verge of bankruptcy following the Great Recession of 2008. Tata offered to buy two iconic brands in the Ford portfolio -- Jaguar and Land Rover.

The USD 2.3 billion all-cash deal was completed in June 2008 and Ford chairman Bill Ford thanked Tata, saying, "You are doing us a big favour by buying JLR'," Pravin Kadle, who was part of the team that travelled with Ratan Tata to the US in 1999, had recounted during a public event in 2015. *—PTI*

Air India airlines make inflight announcements

Air India, Air India Express and Vistara are making inflight announcements on Thursday in remembrance of Tata Group patriarch Ratan Tata for whom aviation was especially close to his heart. As a mark of respect for late Ratan Tata, Air India Express switched over to a theme featuring white lillies in a dark background on its website and social media handles. *—PTI*

PHOTO: PTI

SENSEX RISES 144.31 POINTS

Tech Mahindra, Sun Pharmaceuticals were the major laggards **PHOTO: PTI**

Sensex, Nifty close higher amid firm global cues

MUMBAI, 10 OCT

Equity benchmark indices Sensex and Nifty settled higher on Thursday due to gains in banking, power and industrial stocks amid a firm trend in global markets.

The 30-share BSE Sensex rose 144.31 points, or 0.18 per cent, to settle at 81,611.41. During the day, it soared 535.74 points, or 0.65 per cent, to hit an intra-day high of 82,002.84.

The NSE Nifty increased 16.50 points, or 0.07 per cent, to close at 24,998.45.

In the intra-day trade, it rose 152.1 points, or 0.60 per cent, to hit a high of 25,134.05.

"The market traded on a range bound trend with a negative bias ahead of the start of Q2 result.

"The Asian market started well but could not hold on to the gains as European markets waved on a negative trend in anticipation of the key US inflation data, global bond yields are rising," Vinod Nair, Head of Research at Geojit Financial Services, said.

From the 30 Sensex companies, Kotak Mahindra Bank, JSW Steel, HDFC Bank, Power Grid, IndusInd Bank, Maruti Suzuki India, NTPC, Axis Bank and Mahindra & Mahindra were among the gainers.

- Kotak Mahindra Bank, JSW Steel, HDFC Bank, Power Grid, IndusInd Bank, Maruti Suzuki India, NTPC, Axis Bank and Mahindra & Mahindra were among the gainers

Tech Mahindra, Sun Pharmaceuticals, Infosys, Titan, Tata Motors, Larsen & Toubro and Tata Consultancy Services were among the laggards.

Domestic broader market momentum was mixed with caution as the initial expectation of Q2FY25 results is subdued due to a subpar momentum in the global and rural demand, Nair added.

Global oil benchmark Brent Crude climbed 1.37 per cent to USD 77.63 a barrel in futures trade.

In Asian markets, Tokyo, Hong Kong, Shanghai and Seoul were closed higher.

Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs) offloaded equities worth Rs 4,562.71 crore on Wednesday, while Domestic Institutional Investors (DIIs) bought equities worth Rs 3,508.61 crore, according to exchange data. *—PTI*

Equity mutual funds inflow drops 10% in September

NEW DELHI, 10 OCT

Equity mutual funds attracted Rs 34,419 crore in September, marking a decline of 10 per cent from the preceding month, on a sharp slump in inflow in thematic and large-cap funds.

This was also the lowest level of inflow since April when equity schemes saw investments of Rs 18,917 crore.

Despite the drop in net inflows, this was still the 43rd consecutive month of net inflow in the equity-oriented funds highlighting the ever-increasing appeal of mutual funds among investors, data with the Association of Mutual Funds in India (AMFI) showed

PHOTO: PTI

on Thursday.

Moreover, monthly contributions from the Systematic Investment Plan (SIP) rose to an all-time high of Rs 24,509 crore in September, as against Rs 23,547 in August.

This highlights the shifting investor sentiment towards disciplined and long-term wealth accumulation, Venkat Chalasani, Chief Executive, AMFI, said. Overall, the mutual fund industry witnessed an outflow of Rs 71,114 crore in the month under review, after an investment of Rs 1.08 lakh crore in August, largely due to withdrawal to the tune of Rs 1.14 lakh crore from debt schemes. Undeterred by the outflow, the industry's net assets under management rose to Rs 67 lakh crore last month from Rs 66.7 lakh crore in August. As per the data, equity-oriented schemes witnessed an inflow of Rs 34,419 crore in September, way lower than Rs 38,239 crore attracted in August and Rs 37,113 crore in July. *—PTI*

Vedanta Aluminium digitally links system with LME

NEW DELHI, 5 OCT

Vedanta Aluminium on Thursday said it has digitally linked its metal quality analysis system with the London Metal Exchange (LME) -- the global hub for trading industrial metals and setting benchmark prices.

"This makes Vedanta Aluminium the first smelter in India to digitally link its metal quality analysis system with it and the fifth primary aluminium producer globally to establish a direct digital connection for Certificates of Analysis submission from its smelters to the LME Passport platform," it said. *—PTI*

Use info from all relevant sources: RBI to banks

MUMBAI, 10 OCT

The Reserve Bank of India on Thursday asked banks, NBFCs, and other entities regulated by it to use information obtained from all relevant internal and external sources for their risk assessment exercise.

Reserve Bank's Regulated entities (REs) have to carry out 'Money Laundering and Terrorist Financing Risk Assessment' exercise periodically to identify, assess and take effective measures to mitigate their Money Laundering (ML), Terrorist Financing (TF) and Proliferation Financing (PF) risks for clients, countries or geographic areas, products, services, and transactions or delivery channels. Central bank has issued 'The Internal Risk Assessment Guidance for Money Laundering/ Terrorist Financing' for the REs, particularly for the dealing staff and the Anti-Money Laundering (AML)/ Countering Financing of Terrorism (CFT) / Counter Proliferation Financing (CPF) practitioners of the REs.

It specifies key princi- ples for an internal risk assessment (IRA) exercise.

"The enterprise-level risk assessment forms the bedrock of RBA (Risk-Based Approach). It enables the REs to understand how and to what extent they are vulnerable to ML/ TF/PF risks which help REs in determining the allocation of attention and AML/CFT resources necessary to mitigate that risk," the RBI said.

REs should use information obtained from all relevant internal and external sources for the IRA exercise, it said.

Internal sources include data/information from specific business relevant information from other related verticals of REs (such as fraud/ cyber/IT risk management verticals). *—PTI*

Indian auto sector sees USD 1.9B investment in Q3 2024

NEW DELHI, 10 OCT

The Indian automotive sector witnessed a significant resurgence in the third quarter of 2024, with 32 deals amounting to USD 1.9 billion across mergers and acquisitions (M&A), private equity (PE), initial public offerings (IPO), and qualified institutional placements (QIP), the as per the report by Grant Thornton.

This marked the highest quarterly activity since the fourth quarter of 2021, it added.

As per the report, the quarter also saw a 30 per cent growth in deal values compared to the second quarter of 2024, signaling renewed investor confidence in the automotive industry.

The report highlights that the M&A activity has also rebounded with investors focusing more on innovation.

M&A activity in the auto sector saw 6 deals worth USD 74 million, representing a 20 per cent increase in volume and a 30 per cent rise in value from the second quarter of 2024, the report adds.

PHOTO: PTI

The major M&A deal of the quarter was Exicom Tele-Systems Ltd's USD 30 million acquisition of a charging technology company, Tritium Pty Ltd.

"With government support through the PM E- DRIVE scheme and the industry's focus on alternative fuel technologies, we expect increased global PE investments and partnerships, positioning India as a leading export hub for electric and smart mobility solutions," said Saket Mehra, Partner, Grant Thornton Bharat. *—ANI*

IN FIRST SIX MONTHS

UPI transactions' volume rises 52% to 78.97B in Jan-June

NEW DELHI, 10 OCT

Indian instant payment system Unified Payment Interface (UPI) transaction volumes recorded a 52 per cent year-on-year surge to 78.97 billion in the first six months of 2024, according to a report.

In its India Digital Payments Report for the first half of 2024 (January to June), payment technology service provider Worldline said on Thursday that UPI continues to rule the payment market and is rapidly expanding its reach.

"The number of UPI transactions rose significantly from 8.03 billion in January 2023 to 13.9 billion by June 2024. This growth in volume was matched by an increase in transaction value, which climbed from Rs 12.98 trillion in January 2023 to an impressive Rs 20.07 trillion in June 2024.

"When comparing H1 2024 to the same period in 2023, UPI transaction volume saw a substantial increase of 52 per cent, rising from 51.9 billion to 78.97 billion," the report said.

The value of transactions grew 40 per cent, increasing from Rs 83.16 trillion to Rs 116.63 trillion.

PhonePe emerged as the top UPI app, followed by Google Pay and Paytm **PHOTO: ANI**

In terms of volume and value contribution, PhonePe emerged as the top UPI app, followed by Google Pay and Paytm.

However, average ticket size (ATS) of UPI transactions saw a decline of 8 per cent, the report noted. ATS consists of person-to-person (P2P) and person-to-merchant (P2M) transactions. Grocery stores, restaurants, service stations, clothing stores, government services, pharmacies, and hospitals were the most visited in-store merchant categories in the first half of 2024.

According to the research, they collectively accounted for almost 53 per cent of the overall transaction value and 68 per cent of the transaction volume. *—PTI*

Truecaller launches name verification in India using UPI

Truecaller Android Premium users in India can now validate their identity through UPI-based verification, enhancing trust and authenticity in digital communication. Truecaller launches blue tick verification for all Premium users in India. The new Verified Badge service allows users to verify their identity through the government-backed Unified Payments Interface (UPI) to confirm their correct names. The new Verified Badge feature leverages external verification through the Unified Payments Interface (UPI), ensuring that users' identities are authenticated using the same reliable methods employed by major financial institutions. This process allows users to initiate verification themselves by selecting the name they want to display, based on information received from UPI. *—PTI*

PHOTO: PTI

Lakshya Sen bows out of Arctic Open

VANTAA, 10 OCT

Star Indian shuttler Lakshya Sen squandered a one-game advantage to lose to Chou Tien Chen of Chinese Taipei in the pre-quarterfinals of the Arctic Open badminton tournament here on Thursday.The 23-year-old toiled hard for one hour and 10 minutes before going down 21-19 18-21 15-21 to his seventh-seed opponent in the second round of the Super 500 tournament.It was bad in the office for India as all shuttlers from the country made second-round exits.Indian qualifier Kiran George, who had defeated World No 25 Wang Tzu Wei of Chinese Taipei on Wednesday, was brushed aside 17-21 8-21 by fifth seed Jonatan Christie of Indonesia in the men's singles event.Malvika Bansod meekly surrendered (15-21 8-21) to Ratchanok Intanon in the women's singles contest.Unnati Hooda and Aakarshi Kashyap also lost their respective round of 16 games.Unnati went down 10-21 19-21 to Canada's Michelle Li, and Aakarshi lost 9-21 8-21 to second-seed Han Yue of China.—*PTI*

Samarth and Aishwarya sail into semis

NEW DELHI, 10 OCT

Third seed Samarth Sahita and Aishwarya Jadhav of Maharashtra advanced to the junior semifinals of the Fenesta Open National Tennis Championship in their respective categories here on Thursday. Samarth continued his unbeaten run in the boys' singles Under-16 category and dominated the quarterfinal match against Delhi's Ojas Mehlawat from the beginning. He blanked Ojas in the first set before winning the second set to clinch a 6-0, 6-3 victory.—*PTI*

Sei Young Kim cards 10-under 62 to lead LPGA event

SHANGHAI, 10 OCT

Sei Young Kim, looking for her first victory this season, opened with a 10-under 62 on Thursday to lead the first round of the Buick LPGA Shanghai tournament. The South Korean shot a 28 on her first nine holes at the Qizhong Garden Golf Club, which included an eagle on the 17th, and then came home with a 34 on her second nine holes. It was her low round of the year and comes after she finished third in September in the last LPGA event the Walmart NW Arkansas Championship. Celine Boutier of France was two shots behind with a 64, and American Lucy Li was three back with a 65.—*PTI*

PHOTO: @PREMIERLEAGUE

Former PL star Baldock found dead in pool

LONDON, 10 OCT

Panathinaikos and Greece international defender George Baldock was found dead in his swimming pool on Wednesday, Greek news reports said. The 31-year-old English-born right-back died at home in the southern Athens suburb of Glyfada, state agency ANA said. Greece's Super League and several clubs expressed their condolences. State TV ERT said the player was "at the bottom of the pool" and a bottle of alcohol was found at the scene. ANA said Baldock's wife, who is abroad, alerted the owner of the residence after unsuccessfully trying to reach the player on the phone.—*PTI*

Ranji Trophy: Shreyas and Kishan are on a mission

K'taka braces for a tough challenge against MP in opener

NEW DELHI, 10 OCT

In the time since Karnataka won the last of its eight titles in 2014-15, Saurashtra and Vidarbha have won the crown twice each, Gujarat once, and Madhya Pradesh once. Powerhouse Mumbai bagged the remaining two but had to wait six years after the 2015-16 triumph.

Karnataka has seen this deepening imprint from close quarters, for it has lost two times each to Vidarbha and Saurashtra in the knockouts in recent times. That should make clear the magnitude of the test that awaits the Mayank Agarwal & Co. when they take on Madhya Pradesh in their 2024-25 Elite Group-C opener at the Holkar Stadium here from Friday.

Shreyas Iyer would like to sit back on a 'Time Machine' to revive his start-stop international career while Ishan Kishan would aim to clear the popular perception about his allegedly "misplaced priorities" when the 90th edition of Ranji Trophy starts across the country with hundreds of players ready to slog it out for different ambitions and varied

Shreyas Iyer and Ishan Kishan PHOTO: PTI

goals. The Indian cricket board's powerful rap on the knuckles to the 'IPL happy duo' was a message loud and clear to anyone who would care to listen to earn mega bucks in the IPL auction, learn to give respect to the foundation of the country's cricket India's very own national championship.

Iyer wouldn't mind having a 1,321-run reason like he had in the 2015-16 Ranji edition which brought him into national reckoning. He is at a crossroads where it may not take long to slip off the selector's radar as his favourite ODI format is slowly losing relevance.

Similarly, Kishan, who has fallen off the pecking order among national 'keepers, has accepted the responsibility to captain Jharkhand which would also be a signal of his intent for Ajit Agarkar and his colleagues.

Like every edition, the Ranji Trophy will be devoid of star power with none of the country's top 17-18 players likely to be available throughout the season due to eight Test matches scheduled between 16 October to 7 January. The next 18 will only be available for a single round before they embark on India's 'A' tour to Australia while another 15 among the younger crop of top T20 stars are also unavailable for a couple of weeks owing to a four-match T20I series in South Africa.

If that is not enough, another 15 will be in Muscat for the Emerging Asia Cup tournament, where BCCI wouldn't send its U-23 team like in previous years as other Asian nations don't have robust age-group programmes.

Like every year, the national selectors would be out there to unearth hidden diamonds and give them wings to fly in the coming years.

The Indian Test team's philosophy has undergone seachange over the years and it will no longer just be about the volume of runs scored and the quantum of wickets."If runs and wickets alone would have been a marker then Milind Kumar or Jalaj Saxena would have played for India," a former national selector, who has a deep understanding of the process said. —*PTI*

WUHAN OPEN 2024

Aryna makes big year-end No. 1 move

BUDAPEST, 20 SEPT

Aryna Sabalenka has moved above Iga Swiatek in the race to finish as the year-end world No. 1 after a rallying victory at the Wuhan Open.

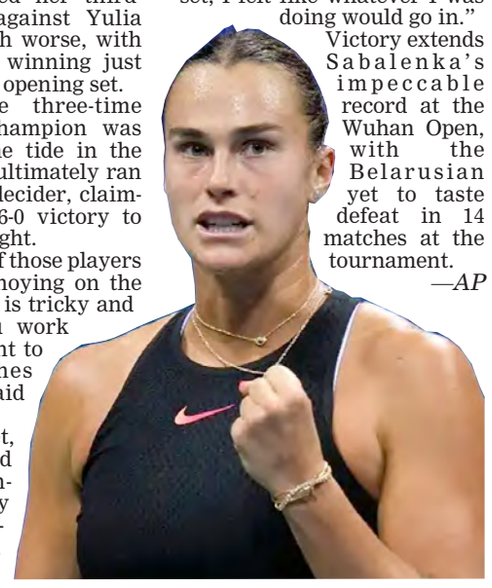
World No. 2 Sabalenka could not have started her third-round match against Yulia Putintseva much worse, with the Belarusian winning just one game in the opening set.

However, the three-time Grand Slam champion was able to turn the tide in the second set and ultimately ran away with the decider, claiming a 1-6, 6-4, 6-0 victory to reach the last eight.

"Yulia is one of those players who can be annoying on the court. Her style is tricky and she makes you work for it if you want to win matches against her," said Sabalenka.

"In the first set, she just played incredible tennis, honestly there was nothing I could do. In the second set, I just tried to fix my serve, which didn't work at the beginning.

"Somehow I just managed to figure my serve and step in and put so much pressure on her. Somehow I was able to win that set and in the third set, I felt like whatever I was doing would go in."



Victory extends Sabalenka's impeccable record at the Wuhan Open, with the Belarusian yet to taste defeat in 14 matches at the tournament. —*AP*

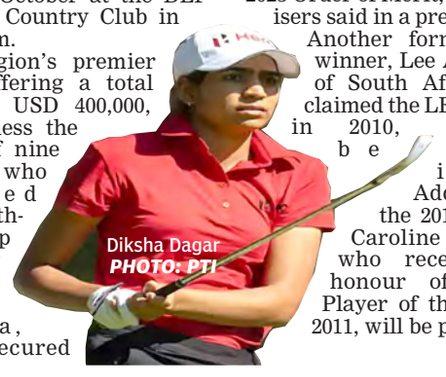
Diksha leads home in women's Indian Open

NEW DELHI, 10 OCT

The seasoned Diksha Dagar will spearhead the Indian challenge in a strong field for this month's Hero Women's Indian Open 2024, where reigning Ladies European Tour Order of Merit leader Chiara Tamburlini of Switzerland will be among the strongest contender.

The event will be held from 24 to 27 October at the DLF Golf and Country Club in Gurugram.

The region's premier event, offering a total purse of USD 400,000, will witness the return of nine players who secured spots within the Top 10 during the 2023 edition.



Diksha Dagar PHOTO: PTI

Diksha, who secured third place last year, and Gaurika Bishnoi, who finished eighth, will be the major Indian names in the field.

The three former champions in the field are Christine Wolf (2019), Camille Chevalier (2017) and Caroline Hedwall (2011). The field is further bolstered by the participation of several notable players, including Trichat Cheenglab of Thailand, the winner of the 2023 Order of Merit, the organisers said in a press release.

Another former OOM winner, Lee Anne Pace of South Africa, who claimed the LET top spot in 2010, will also be competing. Additionally, the 2010 winner, Caroline Hedwall, who received the honour of Players Player of the Year in 2011, will be present. —*PTI*

T20I SERIES INDIA VS B'DESH

Indian players are best in the world, they bat well: Taskin

NEW DELHI, 10 OCT

Indian players are the best in the world and can bat well in any conditions, said Bangladesh pacer Taskin Ahmed while conceding that batting frailties have let down the visitors in the T20I series, which the hosts lead 2-0 with one match left to play.

Bangladesh face a potential series whitewash after losing the second T20I by 86 runs, having lost the first match by 7 wickets.

"(There is) no doubt that they are (the) best in the world, not only in their (home) conditions but all over the world. They are more experienced and better players than us," Taskin told the media on Wednesday.

The pace trio of Taskin, Tanzim Hasan Sakib and Mustafizur Rahman outfoxed the Indian top order inside the powerplay, putting Bangladesh in a strong position.

However, the spinners couldn't maintain that advantage, allowing the pair of Nitish Kumar Reddy and Rinku Singh to rescue the hosts and get to a formidable total of 221/9.

"In the powerplay, we did well, but they batted well in the end and unfortunately spinners had a bad day. Normally, we don't have these kind of bad days but in T20 anything can happen on any day," Taskin said.

"The spinners could not grip the ball as there was dew. We were in the game till the 11th or 12th over and on this wicket, if we had kept them under 180 runs, it was chaseable," said Taskin, who was the pick among the bowlers with 4-0-16-2. In reply, Bangladesh managed a mere 135/9 in their 20 overs, a total that would have been even lower if not for the veteran Mahmudullah's contribution of 41 runs off 39 balls. "We all know the Delhi ground is a high scoring (venue), the average (score) is more than 200. We didn't play to our best potential," he said. —*PTI*

England seize opportunity after Brook triple

MULTAN, 10 OCT

England's staggering 823 for 7, their third-highest total and fourth overall, featuring Harry Brook's maiden triple-century of 317 and Joe Root's new career-best of 262, has laden this match with more history for themselves. Pakistan, meanwhile, plumbed new depths.

A tough time in the field led to a dreadful start to their second innings, losing Abdullah Shafique's first ball and then finding themselves 82 for 6, before eventually closing on 152 for 6. With Abrar Ahmed hospitalized with a fever, they are likely three wickets away from a sixth consecutive Test defeat, and third at home. **Pakistan** 556 and 152 for 6 (Salman 41*, Atkinson 2-28) trail **England** 823 for 7 dec (Brook 317, Root 262, Duckett 84, Crawley 78) by 115 runs. —*PTI*

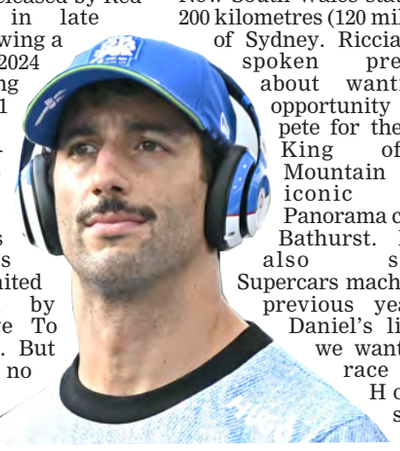
Daniel is courted by Australian Supercars series

BATHHURST, 10 OCT

Daniel Ricciardo's career in Formula 1 might be over, but he has an open invitation from the Australian Supercars chief if he wants to race on the touring car circuit.

Eight-time F1 race winner Ricciardo was released by Red Bull Racing in late September following a disappointing 2024 campaign, ending a 14-year F1 career.

The 35-year-old Ricciardo made a lasting impact on F1 as one of the faces of the sport's boom in the United States driven by Netflix's "Drive To Survive" series. But he has shown no interest in moving to American motorsports such as IndyCar or NASCAR. Supercars chief Shane Howard on Thursday said the Australian would be welcome to drive on his home country's biggest racing series. Howard commented ahead of Sunday's showpiece Bathurst 1000 race in central New South Wales state, about 200 kilometres (120 miles) west of Sydney. Ricciardo has spoken previously about wanting an opportunity to compete for the title of King of the Mountain at the iconic Mount Panorama circuit at Bathurst. He has also sampled Supercars machinery in previous years. "If Daniel's listening, we want you to race here," Howard said. —*PTI*



Richard Gasquet to retire after French Open

PARIS, 10 OCT

Once known as the "little Mozart of French tennis," Richard Gasquet is set to end his career without a major to his name.

At 38, the French player renowned for his exceptional one-handed backhand told L'Equipe newspaper Thursday that he will end his career after the French Open in front of his home fans.

"I'll be stopping at Roland Garros next year," Gasquet said. "I think this is the best time for me to do it. It's the best tournament to do it. It's wonderful, and we're lucky as Frenchmen to be able to retire in such unbelievable places. The end is always complicated, as all the former great players have often told me. You never know when, how, where. As far as I'm concerned, it was obvious."—*PTI*

India give big push to NRR with 82-run win over Sri Lanka

DUBAI, 10 OCT

The seasoned duo of Smriti Mandhana and Harmanpreet Kaur was back to its sizzling best as India gave a massive boost to their net run rate with an 82-run hammering of Sri Lanka in the Women's T20 World Cup here on Wednesday.

The 98-run stand between Shafali Verma (43 off 40) and Smriti (50 off 38) set the tone for the innings after India opted to bat at the Dubai International Stadium. Harmanpreet (52 not out off 27) then got welcome runs in the death overs to push India past 170, the highest total of the competition thus far.

Sri Lanka, who had got the better of India in the Asia Cup, could never really get going in the run chase and were all out for 90 in 19.5 overs. It was Sri Lanka's third loss in as many games, effectively putting them out of the semifinal race.

With their second win in three games, India remains in the hunt for a last-four spot from Group A. The loss to New Zealand had put a severe dent to India's net run rate and they needed a big win to make amends, something they managed on Wednesday. —*PTI*

Smriti Mandhana and Harmanpreet Kaur PHOTO: PTI

TODAY'S MATCH

Australia vs Pakistan
Time: 7.30 pm

ICC WOMEN'S T20 WORLD CUP

TO WOO OLYMPIC VOTERS

IOC sets Jan date for 7 prez candidates

LAUSANNE, 10 OCT

The International Olympic Committee has set a 30 Jan. date for the key presidential election meeting where seven candidates will meet with voters ahead of their ballot in March.

The closed-door meeting at IOC headquarters is the only set-piece campaign event in perhaps the most discreet and secretive election in world sports. IOC rules prohibit candidates from publishing videos, organizing public meetings, or taking part in public debates.

"This in-camera meeting will allow the IOC members to hear from the seven candidates about their programs," the Olympic body said in a statement on Thursday.

Vice President Juan Antonio Samaranch PHOTO: IOC

The candidates to replace outgoing IOC president Thomas Bach include three members of the executive board he chairs: Vice President Juan Antonio Samaranch Jr. of Spain, Prince Feisal al Hussein of Jordan, and Kirsty Coventry of Zimbabwe.

The other four are presidents of Olympic sports governing bodies: track and field's Sebastian Coe of Britain; cycling's David Lappartient from France; gymnastics leader Molinari Watanabe of Japan; and skiing's Johan Eliasch, a Swedish-British citizen. The vote by about 100 of their fellow IOC members — including European and Middle East royalty, sports officials, former and current Olympic athletes, politicians, and billionaire industrialists is at a March 18-21 meeting near Ancient Olympia in Greece.

Bach is reaching his statutory maximum of 12 years in office and confirmed in August at the Paris Olympics that he will leave. His scheduled exit is in June after a three-month transition period with his successor.

He has long been viewed as favoring Coventry, the sports minister in Zimbabwe, who would be the first woman president in the IOC's 130-year history and the first from Africa. A two-time Olympic gold medalist in swimming, Coventry was surprisingly the only woman candidate to enter the contest.

The IOC's top job ideally calls for deep knowledge of managing sports, understanding athletes' needs, and nimble skills in global politics.

Key questions for the next IOC leader include picking a host for the 2036 Olympics which has India and Qatar among the contenders assessing the impact of climate change on the global sports calendar and the Winter Games, gender issues. —*PTI*

Giuntoli to scout five players in Italy vs Belgium

GEORGETOWN, 10 OCT

This evening, Italy and Belgium will lock horns in the UEFA Nations League, while Juventus Football Director Cristiano Giuntoli will be a keen observer.

According to La Gazzetta dello Sport via JuventusNews24, the 52-year-old will be in attendance at the Stadio Olimpico in Rome to monitor four Belgian players and one Italy debutant.

The first name on the list is Lois Openda who has been finding more space in the Belgian lineup as of late. The 24-year-old has already scored four goals in six Bundesliga appearances for RB Leipzig this season. But with a long-term contract until 2028 and a valuation that could reach 60 million euros, signing the striker won't be an easy mission. The second name on the list is Dodi Lukebakio, a 27-year-old winger who has been plying his trade at Sevilla since 2023. Then we have Zeno Debast, a 20-year-old central defender who rose through the ranks of Anderlecht before joining Sporting Lisbon last summer. —*AP*

Cristiano Giuntoli PHOTO: @JUVENTUS